REPORT RESUMES

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ROUGHING IT. THE OLD MAN AND THE SEA. SHORT STORIES. LYRIC POETRY. LITERATURE CURRICULUM III, STUDENT VERSION.

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A STUDENT VERSION OF A LITERATURE CURRICULUM GUIDE WAS PROVIDED FOR TWAIN'S "ROUGHING IT," HEMINGWAY'S "THE OLD MAN AND THE SEA," FOUR SHORT STORIES, AND 20 LYRIC POEMS. THE SHORT STORIES INCLUDED WERE (1) "THE MONKEY'S PAW" BY W.W. JACOBS, (2) "PAUL'S CASE" BY WILLA CATHER, (3) "THE CASK OF AMONTILLADO" BY POE, AND (4) "HAIRCUT" BY RING LARDNER. AN INTRODUCTION, DISCUSSION QUESTIONS, AND SUGGESTIONS FOR COMPOSITIONS, EXERCISES, AND FURTHER READINGS ACCOMPANY THE WORKS INCLUDED. THE TEACHER VERSION IS ED 010 812. RELATED REPORTS ARE ED 010 129 THROUGH ED 010 160 AND ED 010 803 THROUGH ED 010 832. (GD)

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ROUGHING IT.

THE OLD MAN AND THE SEA.

SHORT STORIES.

LYRIC POETRY.

Literature Curriculum III,
Student Version .

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OREGON CURRICULUM STUDY CENTER

NOVEL: Roughing It

Literature Curriculum III

Student Version

ROUGHING IT

Student Version

You are about to read and discuss Mark Twain's Roughing It, a book about a journey across the Great Plains and Rocky Mountains to the Nevada mining frontier in 1861. It was written about ten years after the actual trip was made and was published in 1872. Thus in Mark Twain's career Roughing It appeared four years before The Adventures of Tom Sawyer (1876) and twelve years before The Adventures of Huckleberry Finn (1884), which is also about a journey.

In 1861, of course, "Mark Twain" did not exist; the still comparatively young man (he was 26) who made westward trip was known only by his real name, Samuel Clemens. It might be said, however, that although he didn't know it at the time Sam Clemens really went to Nevada to get Mark Twain born, for it was as a reporter on the Virginia City Enterprise that he first began to use the pen name that was to become so famous. The name itself was a joke: it was a technical term used during soundings of the river bottom on the Mississippi, meaning two fathoms deep--about twelve feet, that is: not very "deep," really, although deep enough for navigation. The name became a household word, and the familiar "Mark" came to be used of the writer by people who would not have dreamed of calling him anything but Mr. Clemens in the flesh.

The first six and a half pages (xix-xxv) of the Foreword to the Signet edition of the book will provide you in brief space with a few facts about the book's composition and the "thread of autobiographical continuity that runs through it." You are urged to read them, for it is important to understand the *kind* of thing you are dealing with. We have said, for instance, that both Huckleberry Finn and Roughing It are about journeys; both of them are very much American journeys, one of them downriver on a raft from a town in northern Missouri, the other westward in a stagecoach--"an imposing cradle on wheels," as Mark calls it, "drawn by six handsome horses." Both of them devote much space to what may as well be called "the adventures of the road," for rivers have always been roadways. There is, however, some difference between the two books. Huckleberry Finn is, as we say, "pure" fiction. By that we probably mean that Sam Clemens' father was not a drunken savage and Sam never made a trip down the river on a raft with a runaway slave; whereas Sam Clemens in 1861 *did* go west with his brother, he *did* write letters home to his mother about his "great expectations" as a gold and silver prospector, and he *did* finally admit failure in that venture and get a job on the Virginia City newspaper that paid him a weekly wage that was a sorry comedown from his dreams of fabulous wealth in the goldfields.

However, as our editor points out, Roughing It cannot be read as an entirely dependable account of the actual experience of the author in 1861. It is a strange and tantalizing and (for some people perhaps) an exasperating book in that it is neither pure fiction like Huckleberry Finn nor pure and dependable autobiography like, say, The Autobiography of Benjamin Franklin. How are we to take it?

It is perhaps advisable after all to take it simply as a work of the imagination based in part on fact. We are perhaps encouraged to do so by the author himself, who, although of course he writes in the first person singular, never gives that "I" a proper name. We may think of that "I," then, the story-teller himself, as the anonymous "hero" of the book. Since "Mark Twain" was in a sense a fictitious character we may think and speak of the hero as "Mark," but some readers may prefer simply to be content with the word "hero." It is safer to do so. "Mark" was not to be trusted. He was always pulling the leg of his reader. Let us not be taken in.

What else can be said about how to take the book? What is it really about? What, that is, is its subject?

We have already said that it is about a journey--actually it is about several journeys: one long one, carrying the hero in twenty days over the 1700-mile trail to Carson City, Nevada (he reaches his destination in Cahpter XXI); and several short ones into the country around the frontier town. You will first of course be most concerned with the long journey westward, and reading that part of the book you will be made aware of a peculiarity of the book's form. Its form is determined by the subject, the journey, the adventures of the road. The incidents of the story are provided by the chances of the trip. Things happen to the hero, he does not make them happen. He is at the mercy of the trail, the country, and the weather. No event has any necessary connection with the event immediately preceding it. This kind of narrative form is called episodic.

It is however not enough to say simply that the book's subject is a journey, or several journeys. The hero, for instance, is a part of the book's subject--without him, of course, there could be no journey. What questions might be asked about the hero? (A discussion of any book always begins with questions, whether the discussion takes place in a classroom or elsewhere. In the classroom the teacher supplies some of the questions. You cooperate by asking others. Learning to ask the right questions is an important part of education. Work at it. One must always remember that in discussing a work of literature many of the questions do not have one right answer, in the sense that a problem in algebra has one right solution.)

Why does the hero go west? He supplies his own answers to that one in the first chapter: to have romantic adventures and also to get rich. These answers can be called motives: psychological impulses or forces that make us do things. Motives also take the form of expectations: to wish for something is often also to hope and expect that they will come true. Hopes and expectations are often experienced as day- dreams, which may be called fantasies, and fantasies furnish the material, the subject, of many books. The hero's motives, expectations, fantasies are important elements in the subject of Roughing It.

This, then, leads to another important question: what happens to the hero's expectations, his fantasies, in the course of his experiences? Do they turn out to be true or false?

Such questions add to our interest in reading any narrative, and our desire to find answers to them creates a feeling in us that is sometimes called suspense. Will the hero get the girl? We are held in a state of suspense until we find out. Will the hero get the gold? We are held in a state of suspense until we find out. It would be unfair to reveal the conclusion of a detective story to someone who has not yet finished it. It takes away the pleasure of suspense.

Another point can be made. The word "reality" is often taken to be the opposite of the word "dream." Many, many books and plays center upon the difference between dream and reality, between illusion and truth. Since dreams and illusions are by definition false to the truth of our experience, they may often be dangerous. We could not live without them, but if we live too much with and in them we may become very troublesome neighbors, friends, husbands, wives. As children most of us spend a good deal of time in our own private dream worlds. Growing is partly a process of moving out of the dream world into the real one. Knowing what's what. Learning not to expect too much. This process, you will discover, is also a part of the subject of Roughing It. Be on the lookout for examples of the experience. Are discoveries that certain dreams are false happy ones? If the book at times seems to say no, is the negative answer really all of it?

In talking about the hero we have of course also been talking about point of view. The point of view of Roughing It is the point where the hero stands in the book: the first person singular. The "I" stands at the center of things. How would the effect be different if the book had been written in the third person? See how it would work at the beginning:

> Jim Jones's brother had just been appointed Secretary of Nevada Territory, an office that Jim thought was most majestic. Jim coveted his brother's distinction and his financial splendor. Furthermore, the position meant he was going to travel! You see, Jim never had been away from home, and the word "travel" had a seductive charm for him.

Can you explain the difference between this way of writing it and the way the first page actually goes? It is useful to speculate about point of view in this fashion.

Point of view is often used in a somewhat different sense. "What's your point of view about this?" we often say to a friend, meaning by the question what do you think about it, how do you feel about it, what is your attitude toward it? We have already begun a discussion of point of view in this sense, the hero's point of view, in raising some questions about his daydreams about adventure and becoming wealthy. His dreams and fantasies express his attitudes toward experience, toward himself, toward his own future. Point of view in this sense is, as we have seen, a part of the book's subject. However, something else may be said about it.

The man who is telling the story is obviously different in some ways from the hero the story is about. Notice these sentences on the first page: "I was young and ignorant, and I envied my brother. . . I had never been away from home, and that word 'travel' had a seductive charm for me." The past tense supplies the clue: "I was" means I am not now young and ignorant, "I had never" means I have now been away from home (does it mean also that travel no longer has a seductive charm for him?). Thus there are two points of view in the story. One is that of that young and ignorant man leaving home for the first time and full of dreams and expectations about what lies ahead. This is the Tenderfoot. The other is that of the mature man who has learned worldly wisdom and can take a condescending and ironic attitude (point of view) toward the young man he was, his hero: the Forty-Niner, the Old-Timer. The book is about the way in which the Tenderfoot became the Old-Timer.

Do you begin to see how interesting and even complicated terms like subject, form, and point of view become when you try to apply them to the book itself? It is all a part of the fun of it.

The fun of it! Up to this point we have perhaps neglected the best part of the fun of it, we have been a little too solemn and schoolteacherish (isn't that a fine word?) about a book that has so much wit and humor in it, so many chuckles and guffaws (for young and old, as a publisher's ad might say, publisher's ads being what they are). However, to be solemn for just another moment, one may say that the book's humor comes primarily not from the Tenderfoot (he doesn't know enough to be very funny about things) but from the Old Timer. The Old Timer may as well be called Mark Twain, the famous entertainer, the genius of the lecture platform.

It is perhaps "not right," as Mark himself might have said, to work too hard at analyzing humor: there is a danger of analyzing humor out of existence. Perhaps here, then, it will be sufficient simply to call attention to some examples of how the fun works in the book and let it go at that.

Sometimes it appears in the form of the humorous anecdote, for exampl the story of the dog and the coyote in the fifth chapter. The coyote is introduced first and is made to appear a thoroughly disreputable character. "He is always poor, out of luck and friendless. The meanest creatures despise him, and even the fleas would desert him for a velocipede." But he is fast on his feet and he is smart--at least smart enough to provide the innocent dog who takes out after him with a liberal education. The coyote teases him along, plays his game with him for a while, but finally gets tired of that sport, seeming to say, just before leaving him behind forever:

> 'Well, I shall have to tear myself away from you, bub--business is business, and it will not do for me to be fooling along this way all day.'

--and he is off, leaving the dog "solitary and alone in the midst of a vast solitude!" The dog has learned a lesson. He returns sadly to the wagon train feeling "unspeakably mean," and "hangs his tail at half-mast for a week. And thereafter,

> whenever there is a great hue and cry after a coyote, that dog will merely glance in that direction without emotion, and apparently observe to himself, "I believe I do not wish any of that pie."

Having been educated by an Old-Timer, the dog is a little less of a Tenderfoot. The story is an amusing summary of one of the book's subjects.

Sometimes iit appears as humor of characterization (as indeed it does in the anecdote just described). There is the talkative woman who joins the travelers in the stagecoach in the second chapter, who says to them when she is about to disembark: "Folks'll tell you't I've always ben kind o'offish and partic'lar for a gal that's raised in the woods . . . but when people comes along which is my equals, I reckon I'm a pretty sociable heifer after all." Sometimes it takes the form of the Tall Tale, which you may be familiar with in the stories of Paul Bunyan, Davy Crockett, and other legendary or near-legendary figures in American folk literature. A good example in Roughing It is the description of the "Washoe Zephyr" in Chapter XXI, introduced on p. 127 as "a soaring dust-drift about the size of the United States set up edgewise." Although it hid Carson City from view,

> Still, there were sights to be seen which were not wholly uninteresting to newcomers; for the vast dust-cloud was thickly freckled with things strange to the upper air--things living and dead, that flitted hither and thither, going and coming, appearing and disappearing among the rolling billows of dust--hats, chickens, and parasols sailing in the remote heavens; blankets, tin signs, sagebrush, and shingles a shade lower; door-mats and buffalo-robes lower still; shovels and coal-scuttles on the next grade; glass doors, cats, and little children on the next; disrupted lumber yards, light buggies, and wheelbarrows on the next; and down only thirty or forty feet above ground was a scurrying storm of emigrating roofs and vacant lots . . . tradition says the reason there are so many bald people there is, that the wind blows the hair off their heads while they are looking skyward after their hats.

Elsewhere the humor appears simply as fun, play, with words, as in the language used by Mr. Ballou late in the book. Mr. Ballou has an almost artistic feeling for the use of "big words for their own sakes, and independent of any bearing they might have upon the thought he was purposing to convey." Yet he used them so easily and naturally that "one was always catching himself accepting his stately sentences as meaning something when they really meant nothing at all." For Mr. Ballou, horses can be "bituminous from long deprivation." Lost in a snowstorm, and discovering that he and his comrades have been traveling in a circle for two hours, he ejaculates: "By George, this is perfectly hydraulic!" And of the man who got them into that fix, he remarks that he "did not know as much as a logarithm!" In other places the humor appears in the form of understatement or something like it, as when in Chapter XXI the blood from a man's wounds running down over his horse's sides "made the animal look quite picturesque," or when in the second chapter Bemis, who has accidentally shot a mule, is "persuaded" by its owner with a shotgun to buy it, even though "Bemis did not want the mule." So it goes. The fun of it comes from anecdote and characterization, wild exaggeration, play on words, understatement. Lie in wait for it. Make the most of it.

For some of you, the reading of Roughing It may be your first experience with Mark Twain. Next year in the tenth grade you will in all likelihood study in class The Adventures of Huckleberry Finn. Both books, which you can then compare, tell us much about the history of the American West, its values, attitudes, humor, and concrete circumstances: the story of the people, our grandparents and great-grandparents, who went west and grew up with the country. For them the "journey" was a quest, a searching for something. Reading about it is also a kind of quest.

Mark's own story is not of course concluded in this book. Like countless others, he was drawn to the West by the dream of wealth, as we have said. He didn't find it in the gold and silver fields, but he found it later as a writer and lecturer. In his case, in other words, reality finally seemed to fulfill the early expectations after all. The hero became Mark Twain, who early in this century, when he was sixty-seven years old, wrote in his notebook: "My cash income from my books for 1902 was $60, 000. . . Cash from all sources something over $100, 000." And recorded later, on Jan. 1, 1904: "Lay abed nearly all day but wrote 3000 words, earning $900."

Did he get the gold? He did. He was also very famous. The man who as a boy in Hannibal, Mo., never got beyond elementary school, in 1907 was given an honorary degree at Oxford. The occasion was, as always, a magnificent and colorful ceremony. Mark, however, put it all in perspective. "I was particularly anxious," he said, "to see this pageant, so that I could get ideas for my funeral procession, which I am planning on a large scale." The "point of view" of the Old Timer had not changed.

ROUGHING IT

QUESTIONS FOR DISCUSSION

You will not be able to discuss in class everything you read. Your teacher will tell you which episodes to prepare for careful consideration. The following questions are offered as a guide to stimulate your ideas, and to suggest other questions that the reading may arouse in your own mind. You might find them useful as a review for your independent reading, or as clues that will help you look for important things as you read along.

Chapter 1

1. The opening chapter not only provides the reason for the journey west, but it sets the tone for the whole book. What kind of writing does the author lead you to expect? The last paragraph, for instance, contains obvious exaggerations: What is the effect of this?

2. What kind of person do you judge the author to be? Find as many character-revealing clues as you can in this chapter.

Chapter 2

1. How did the author and his brother demonstrate their lack of knowledge of the west by the luggage they prepared for the journey?

2. How efficient were the weapons with which the passengers armed themselves? Does the author regard them as useful for defense? How do you know? What is the effect of the word "persuaded" on p. 32?

3. How does Mark Twain, in a very few words, manage to give you a picture of Bemis, the stage driver, and the woman passenger? Comment upon especially striking words and phrases.

4. How does the author make this episode with the woman passenger amusing?

5. Find an example of metaphor in the episode. How is it developed? What is its effect on you?

Chapter 3

1. This chapter begins with an incident that happens on the journey --the broken thoroughbrace. List the topics that follow. Is this what the opening incident leads you to expect? Why does the digression not irritate the reader?

2. Re-read the description of the jack rabbit, noting the many details. Which ones emphasize the ludicrous aspects of the animal? How does Twain suggest the great speed of the creature?

3. Explain the significance of Twain's reference to "Lilliputian birds," "Lilliputian flocks," and "Brobdingnag."

4. Why was sagebrush so important in the western deserts?

5. Do you think the "gentle statement of fact" which closes the chapter is enough to choke a camel to death? Why do you think Twain inserted the yarn about the camel? Do you believe it? Do you think the author expected you to?

Chapter 4

In this chapter the author gives a detailed description of the stage stations, and of the status enjoyed by the driver. Does the tone of the writing betray the author's opinion of the system?

2. Writing about the comb provided by the stage station, Twain says "It had come down from Esau and Samson." Explain this.

3. Explain the reference to Sodom and Gomorrah.

4. The chapter ends with an account, written some years later, of a train journey over the same territory. Does the contrast heighten the hardships of coach travel, or do you think it an unnecessary addition? Give reasons for your verdict. What is your reaction to it as a reader living in the jet age?

Chapter 5

1. This whole chapter is devoted to an account of the coyote. Much of the power of Twain's description lies in his careful selection of words. For example, he presents the coyote as an outcast among animals by the use of such words as "furtive," "slinking," "spiritless," "cowardly" that have a despicable connotation. How does Twain portray the dog? Find words and phrases that are particularly expressive.

2. This whole account of the coyote and the town dog might be read as a fable. How could the moral be applied to the experiences of the author in Western society?

Chapter 6

This is an informative chapter telling about the levels of the stage coach organization. How has the author kept it interesting?

Chapter 7

1. Clearly the account of Bemis's buffalo hunt is a typically American tall tale. How has Twain's use of dialogue rendered it more plausible?

2. Why do you suppose the author ended the chapter with the anecdote about the cat that ate coconut?

3. What did Bemis mean when he said his Allen weapon was "so confounded comprehensive?"

Chapter 8

1. How does Mark Twain build up a feeling of suspense before the Pony Rider flashed past the stage coach?

2. Is there really any similarity between a person intrigued by the novelty of seeing alkali water for the first time, and a careless mountain climber who causes an avalanche? What is the effect of this bit of logic on the reader? How does it prepare for the final anecdote of the Indian massacr

3. Referring to the hundred and thirty-three people who all claimed to be the sole survivor of the massacre, Mark Twain says, "There was no doubt of the truth of it. I had it from their own lips." What kind of statement would you call that?

4. Do you think these westerners expected Mark Twain and his brother to believe them? What do you gather is the western attitude toward newcomers, especially from the east?

Chapter 9

1. How does the author convey the feeling that Laramie Peak is a living presence dominating the Black Hills? Does this help to set the atmosphere of hostile Indian country? How?

2. Apparently the Indians are not the only source of danger and violence in the west. What does this chapter tell you about the typical inhabitants of the region?

3. Explain why a man of Slade's reputation was invaluable to the stage coach company. What does it tell you about this society?

4. Find an example of Twain's humor in the first paragraph of this chapter. Does it fit the circumstances? How does it differ from the playful exaggeration of earlier episodes? Does it in any way reveal the author's opinion of life in the west?

Chapters 10 and 11

Once again Twain interrupts the account of his journey, this time to discuss the character of Slade. These two chapters are given over entirely to a consideration of this famous outlaw.

1. How did the Slade the author met compare with the legendary accounts of the man?

2. Why did Twain hesitate to label Slade a coward, even though he did not meet his death with much courage?

3. Discuss Slade's character. What quality do you think he lacked?

Chapter 12

1. Once again Twain makes use of personification in his description of the Rocky Mountains. Find as many examples as you can, and explain how he has managed to convey the awe and majesty of the scenery through this device.

2. Many incidents have been packed into this chapter. List them in order, and comment upon the way the author has made them interesting to the reader.

3. Find examples of humor and discuss the techniques the author has used.

Chapters 13-16

These four chapters deal with the author's stay in and around Salt Lake City, though, in Twain's own words, he and his fellow travellers left it "not so very much wiser, as regards the 'Mormon question,' than when we arrived." Often a writer reveals his attitudes not only by direct statement, but also through the details he chooses to write about, as well as the tone of the telling. What do you think is Mark Twain's opinion of the Mormons? Find places in the narrative that you believe betray his sentiments. Be prepared to discuss this in class, and give reasons for your assertions.

Chapter 17

1. There is a great deal of irony in this chapter as Mark Twain discusses the interpretation of facts, and passes comment upon the value judgments of pioneer society. Find examples, and discuss them in class.

2. To what does Twain refer when he says "We seemed to be wasting our substance in riotous living"?

3. How does Twain's account of the episode with the half-breed bootblack betray his prejudice about Indians? Have you detected this attitude before? When?

4. The author makes some interesting comments upon accepted standards of language usage. Toward the bottom of page 112, he pokes fun at the stilted expression of "Great authors"; on page 113 (last line) he mentions how his own grammar is ridiculed by the westerners. Do you remember other occasions when he has commented upon the language used in the west? How would you describe the author's own language and style?

5. Look again at the list of things Mark Twain says make happiness (last paragraph). What is the tone of this paragraph? How would you describe the last sentence?

Chapter 18

1. Notice how the piling of detail upon detail emphasizes the relentless

heat and torturing dryness of the desert. See how many different things Twain mentions.

2. Describing the alkali desert, Twain writes: "Imagine a vast, waveless ocean stricken dead and turned to ashes." What do we call the figures of speech used here? Why are they effective?

3. In the final paragraph, Twain complains that his narrative seems "broken and disjointed in places." Is this a fault, or does it contribute to the misery of the experience?

4. "The poetry was all in the anticipation," said Twain. Can you relate this to anything in the first chapter? Does reality in this book usually fall short of the dream? Discuss this in terms of your own experiences.

Chapter 19

Once again the author finds reality harsh and ugly, as he did crossing the desert. The Goshute Indians have disenchanted him, shattering the "noble savage" imazge built by the "Mellow moonshine of romance." Do you consider his evaluation fair and objective? Discuss the emotional overtones of his descriptions; for example, they "embezzle carrion from the buzzards." Compare Twain's reporting with that of a scientist.

Chapter 20

Why do you think the author devotes a whole chapter to the repetition of a single, untrue anecdote? What indirect comment is he making about western culture?

Chapter 21

1. This chapter marks the end of the journey, and the author's initiation into the ways of Carson City. In your own words, describe the kind of people who lived there, and the surroundings they lived in.

2. Sometimes Twain's humor uses the irony of understatement, and sometimes exaggeration. Find examples of both in this chapter.

3. Find examples of simile and metaphor that add to the effectiveness of Twain's descriptions.

4. How has the author pictured himself throughout this first past of the book? What were the expectations of the young man who set out as private secretary to the Secretary of Nevada Territory? What happened to these extravagant dreams as they came face to face with reality? What incidents in particular caused the dreams to fade?

5. Experience is a great teacher, as Twain found out during his stay in the Territory. The fable of the coyote and the town dog that you discussed in chapter 5 illustrates this well. What other clues did you notice that sugge that an older and wiser Mark Twain is laughing at the innocent dreams of a younger and less worldly-wise brother of the Secretary who set out on the journey?

Chapters 22 and 23

1. Johnny K. . . . was the son of an Ohio Nabob. Explain this term.

2. Why did the author refer to his boat trips on Lake Tahoe as "balloon voyages." Give examples.

3. What picture of himself does the author draw in these chapters? Give examples.

4. Man seems destined ever to be driven out of the "Garden of Eden." What circumstance compelled Twain and Johnny to leave their idyllic existence on the lake shore?

5. Why do you think the author included the final paragraph (p. 141)? Would the narrative have been complete without it?

6. On p. 127, read again the description of Carson City. Now turn to p. 137 and read again the first paragraph describing the timber ranch. What differences do you notice in the styles? Which one is factual and realistic? What kind of detail does it contain? Note the sensory impressions and more ornate style of the other passage. Is this realism or fantasy? How does the author's purpose differ in the two descriptions?

Chapter 24

1. Pick out examples of exaggeration, and discuss the effect they produce on the reader.

2. Who is telling the story, the older, wiser Mark Twain, or the young, ignorant Tenderfoot? Is this aspect exaggerated too?

3. Which descriptive words are particularly effective in painting a picture of the horse? What senses do they appeal to?

Chapter 25

1. Has government bureaucracy changed since Twain's day? What is the tone of this chapter? Cite examples that reveal Twain's opinion of government operations.

Chapters 26-30

1. What change in the author do these five chapters reveal? Do you expect it to be permanent? Give reasons for your answer.

2. Comment upon the newspaper reporting concerning gold and silver mining in the territory. Was it honest, impartial, and responsible? Do you think newspapers today influence people as greatly as they did then? Explain your answer.

3. The "silver fever" brought together an unlikely quartet--two young lawyers, a sixty-year-old blacksmith, and the author. Which did the author

find the most interesting companion? What was his special "talent"? Why did Mr. Ballou use big words when he didn't know what they meant? Comment on some that Mark Twain found especially amusing.

4. "We are descended from desert-lounging Arabs," said Twain. Comment upon this theory as an explanation of the universal joy of "camping out."

5. Why do you think the author said (p. 163) "like the rest of the world, I still go on underrating men of gold and glorifying men of mica"?

6. What lessons did Twain's Humboldt experience teach him? Do you think it qualified him to look into the affairs at Esmeralda?

7. How did the Indians know the flood was coming? The author was unable to explain it. Could you?

Chapters 31, 32, and 33

1. Briefly, retell in your own words the main events that took place on the journey from Honey Lake Smith's to Carson.

2. How does Twain convey so dramatically the bullying Arkansas and his humiliating defeat at the hands of the landlord's wife? Why is dialogue more powerful here than third person descriptive prose?

3. How "sincere" was the "reform" of the men who thought their last night on earth had arrived? Is this typical of human behavior?

Chapters 34-41

1. How does the practical joke played on General Buncombe reflect the westerners' attitude toward "emigrants"? Why do you think they resented outsiders? Comment upon the General's name. Compare the way this story is told with the way the Washoe Zephyr is described.

2. Why was Captain John Nye a good traveling companion? Illustrate.

3. Why did Twain become a laborer in a quartz mill? Did you expect the job to last? Give your reasons.

4. Do you think Twain really believed the legend of the Whiteman cement mine? Why do you think he went along with Higbie?

5. Twain gives some graphic descriptions of the phenomena that make Mono Lake a unique place. List some of the things he writes about that show his insatiable curiosity in the world around him? How does this curiosity contribute to Twain's ability as a writer?

6. What was the author's reaction to "striking it rich"? Were you surprised to learn that he lost his claim? Give your reasons.

Now that you have completed the first part of Roughing It, look back through it, and be prepared to discuss the following questions.

1. On p. 209 Twain describes his career as "slothful, valueless, heedless." Is this a true evaluation of the author as he has revealed himself in Roughing It?

2. With the aid of your librarian, find out all you can about Samuel Clemens. Compare this person with the Mark Twain that emerged as you read Roughing It. Are they the same person? Or are they different? On the basis of your findings, would you say Roughing It is an autobiography?

3. How many journeys does the author make in Roughing It? What factual information about western pioneer society does the account of each journey impart to the reader? Compare it with Kon-Tiki and the other travel literature you read in the 8th grade. Would you call this a comparable account of a travel experience?

4. In the 7th grade you read a story about a journey, The Price of the Head, by John Russell. At that time you discussed the idea of a journey symbolizing self-discovery. Do you think Mark Twain's journeys brought about any change in him? If so, how would you describe it?

5. Does the story of the coyote and the town dog in Chapter 5 remind you of a story you read in the 7th grade? Could it be thought of as summarizing one of the book's themes? In what way? What do we call this kind of story? What other theme of folk mythology of the American west does Mark Twain write about?

6. Dissatisfaction with life as it is seems to be a universal human experience. Many ancient stories tell about a time when life was perfect--the Garden of Eden of the Old Testament, and the Golden Age of ancient Greece, among others. Man is forever trying to recapture this lost perfection. At what point in the book does the author come closest to the happy state? Do you think it is an attainable dream? Give your reasons.

7. What do you think was Mark Twain's reason for going to Carson with his brother in the first place? How had his motive changed by the time he began prospecting? Do you see any relationship between the two dreams? How does the dream compare with the reality? Do you think Mark Twain did become a richer man because of the experience? Explain your answer.

8. In answering the foregoing questions, you have discovered that Roughing It does not confine itself to any one subject. Write a summary of the different things that Mark Twain deals with in this book, both on the concrete level and on the abstract level.

9. Since it deals with so many ideas, would you expect the Form of this book to follow the same pattern as any of the literary works you have studied before? Compare it with The Call of the Wild, for example, where all the details contribute to the story, and the narrative is continuous. How

has Mark Twain organized the adventures he is writing about?

10. Roughing It is written in the first person, but you have learned already that this does not necessarily mean the "I" is the author; you have thought about this in question 2 above. But an author has other ways of making his point of view known to the reader. Some of these ways you have discussed in the questions following each chapter. Using examples from the text, summarize what you believe to be the author's attitudes and beliefs concerning life in the west, and the lessons he learned from his experiences.

Suggestions for Composition

1. Mark Twain reprints an account of a railroad journey, made several years later, covering the same distance he traveled by stage coach. Write an account of the journey made a hundred years later by jet airplane, comparing it with the train journey.

2. Many times during the early part of the journey Twain comments upon the feeling of freedom as civilization is left behind. When he arrives at the frontier, the illusion is shattered by the reality of a lawless existence. As he commented later about the journey through the desert, "the poetry was all in the anticipation." Does civilization limit freedom? Can freedom exist without law? Write a paragraph or two explaining what you understand freedom to mean.

3. The fables of Aesop were told to teach a truth about human behavior. Do you think Mark Twain is doing the same thing with his story of the coyote and the town dog? How does the author himself fit into the fable? Write a brief account of what you think the fable is saying about life on the frontier, and the part the author plays there.

4. What kind of person was attracted to the frontier? Would these men be able to establish settled societies?

5. Mark Twain tells, in Roughing It, how an aura of glory surrounded the person of the stage coach driver, who assumed heroic proportions in the eyes of humble folks. He also commented upon the legends that developed around Slade. How does a man become a myth? Can you name more recent personalities who have become legendary?

6. What has replaced the frontier in modern society? Who are the heroes of this age? Compare these "pioneers" with those of the old west. Must man always have frontiers to conquer and heroes to worship? Write a few paragraphs expressing your ideas.

7. Re-read Twain's account of Bully Old Arkansas and the landlord. Using dialogue, write an account of a real or imaginary incident; for example, a political speaker being heckled by a member of the crowd; an umpire being challenged by an angry ball player; a timid student being "picked on" by the school bully. Use your imagination. Try to get across to the reader the "feel" of the situation through the words you make the characters say.

Suggested Activities and Exercises

1. Prepare a map for the bulletin board tracing Mark Twain's journey by stage coach to Carson City, and marking the two shorter trips to Lake Tahoe and Humboldt mines. Indicate the time taken to make the journey by stagecoach, by train, by automobile, and by airplane.

2. Go to the library and find all you can about the Pony Express. Prepare a report to present to the class.

3. Mark Twain gives quite a lot of information about stage coaching, but it might be interesting to discover still more facts. Prepare a report about stage coaching in the American west, and be ready to answer any questions the class might ask about it.

4. Mark Twain's account of Bemis and the buffalo hunt is really a tall tale. This is a typically American story, and many tall tales have been told about early pioneers. Find some of these stories and read them. Make up a tall tale of your own to tell to the class.

Suggestions for Further Reading

Robert Louis Stevenson, the author of Treasure Island, wrote about his experiences traveling through Spain with a donkey. Travels with a Donkey is very amusing, but the humor differs from Mark Twain's. Perhaps you would like to compare the two books.

More recently, John Steinbeck, the author of The Pearl that you read in the 8th grade, and "The Red Pony" that you read in the 7th grade, made a tour of the United States and recorded his experiences in Travels with Charley.

Another story you might enjoy is an imaginary journey by a mythical personage, Phileas Fogg. Around the World in Eighty Days was originally written by Jules Verne on the installment plan. People became so interested in the progress of Phileas Fogg that he became real to them, and they even placed bets on his ability to circle the globe in the allotted time!

OREGON CURRICULUM STUDY CENTER

NOVEL: The Old Man and the Sea

Literature Curriculum III

Student Version

Student Version

THE OLD MAN AND THE SEA

Introduction

You are going to read The Old Man the Sea, a novel by Ernest Hemingway, who won the Nobel Prize in literature. It is not a lengthy novel; in fact, one might think of it in length as scarcely more than a short story. It is, you will note, what we call a "storied" form; that is, the principal of organization employed by the writer is the narration of a series of incidents.

You will remember from your studies in the seventh and eighth grades that the subject of a piece of literature, whether that piece is an essay, a short story, or a novel, deals not only with things (boats, fish, the sea) but also, and importantly, with ideas (love, fear, hope, courage.) This is especially true of the novel you are about to read. It is about an old Cuban fisherman, who, having gone for 81 days without catching a fish, in desperation goes far out into the Gulf Stream in his small boat. He hooks a great marlin swordfish, and begins a terrible struggle to bring home his prize. Thus, The Old Man and the Sea tells a story of suspense you will read with pleasure. You will feel the spray in your face, the warmth of the sun, and share with Santiago the joys and terrors of the deep. But this narrative is more than just a narrative about a man, a boat, and a fish. It is also about courage, an old man's courage, pitted against tremendous odds. It is about the way he reacts to events that confront him. You soon begin to suspect that Hemingway is telling another story, too. As you read, watch for clues that seem to indicate that there is more to the story than first meets the eye. Who is this man, Santiago? Read Hemingway's description very carefully. Notice, too, that sometimes a character's actions are more revealing than the direct statements an author may make about him. What does Santiago think about the great fish? Why does he struggle so hard to win?

The answers will set you thinking about what the author really means and this in turn will lead you to a consideration of point of view, another term you know well. The story is told in the third person, of course, but does Hemingway concentrate on the main character and tell us only what Santiago can see, hear, or feel? Or does Hemingway let us see into the thoughts and feelings of other people in his story? If the latter is true, you will remember, the point of view of the story is omniscient (all-seeing).

But point of view is a term you will explore more fully now. It is a key term in your study of literature this year. So, as you read, keep some of these questions in mind. What attitude (point of view) does Santiago have? That is, just how does he feel toward Manolin, the boy? toward the sea? the villagers? toward the creatures of the sea? toward the fish, his adversary? You will be interested in the point of view of others in the story, too--of Manolin, the villagers, the tourists. Still more intriguing is Hemingway's attitude toward the people and events in his story. He reveals how he feels about the things which happen in the way he creates the incidents and in the way he has his characters react. Does he invite a sympathetic response from you? This makes you realize, too, that there is also _your_ point of view to be considered. You will react to Santiago's terrible trial as you read. You may not all react alike, but is is unlikely that any of you will read the story with indifference.

Subject and point of view control the happenings and reactions in _The Old Man and the Sea_, but the way the author arranges his incidents--the _form_ he uses to create his story--in turn controls both subject and point of view. The incidents in _The Pearl_ were arranged in straight chronological order. Is this true of _The Old Man and the Sea_? Watch as you read for any "flashbacks." If you find any, you may be sure they have been inserted for a special purpose, to help us understand Santiago better or to understand what happens to him better. It is therefore highly desirable that you, the reader, be especially alert as you read these. Of course, _every_ incident has been provided for a purpose. The author, as he creates characters and incidents, chooses to create those which will move the story to its conclusion. Sometimes he emphasizes one particular incident in order to cause you to react in a certain way or to think a particular thing. As you read this novel, pause occasionally to ask yourself why a certain incident has been included. This will often make a story clearer to you.

Actually, as you begin to perceive the relationship of subject, point of view, and form, you realize, suddenly, that you are learning a very special language and a very subtle one. It is the "language" of literature. As you gain experience, you will gain insight, and with insight, a remarkable increase in the pleasure you derive from a book.

Both you and Santiago will now undertake a journey; see if you can bring home _your_ "marlin."

If so, it will be a "catch" you will not soon forget.

Study Questions

1. Read again the first two paragraphs. What is the purpose, do you think, of these two paragraphs? Who is speaking?
2. What do you learn about the relationship of the man and the boy in the first few pages of this book? Find a passage that shows how Santiago felt about Manolin.
3. Why do you think Hemingway usually refers to Santiago as "the old man" rather than by his name?

4. How many references can you find to Santiago as "strange?" Can you think of any reason for Hemingway emphasizing this quality?

5. How did Manolin feel about his friend as a fisherman? Find a passage to illustrate your answer.

6. Read the passage in which Hemingway describes Santiago's dream. An author has a purpose for everything he provides. Why do you think he told us about the dream? How many times is the dream mentioned?

7. How did Santiago regard the sea? Did this differ from the way most of the fishermen felt?

8. Can you find any incidents which foreshadow the struggle to come? (pg. 126)

9. There are two brief "flashbacks" in the novel. Why do you think they are included?

10. Why do you think Santiago admires Joe Dimaggio?

11. Read the passage describing the warbler that rests briefly on the taut line. What is the significance of this incident?

12. Read the description of the shark on page 100. An author uses concrete detail and figurative language in order to create reality for his readers. Find some example of both in this paragraph.

13. List the following incidents in the order of their occurrence.

    The old man sees a bird circling above a school of fish.
    He eats raw shrimp.
    He kills a Mako shark with his harpoon.
    He lashes the marlin to his skiff.
    The big fish he has hooked draws his skiff out into the Gulf.
    He eats strips of raw tuna.
    The great fish jumps for the first time.
    Santiago loses his harpoon.
    The great fish jumps more than a dozen times.
    Santiago sleeps while waiting for the marlin to tire.
    He kills the marlin.
    His hand is cut badly for the first time.
    He clubs the sharks that attack his fish.
    The great fish takes the bait.
    He kills sharks with his knife lashed to an oar.
    He smashes the tiller of the skiff.
    He carries the mast up the hill on his shoulders.
    He dreams of the lions again after the journey is over and he is in his cabin.

14. Which of the preceding incidents would you consider the climax? Why?

15. Explain how each of the following incidents "grows" out of the preceding.

    The death of the marlin
    The attack of the first shark
    The subsequent attacks by sharks

16. What do you think the sharks symbolize?

17. How did Santiago feel toward the marlin? toward the sharks?

18. The conflict in this story is absorbing and easily defined. But who is the winner, do you think? The sharks? The old man? Even though the old man lost his fish, do you think he won something? If so, what? Is it ever worthwhile to fight--or protest--when victory is not only unlikely, but impossible? How do you think Hemingway felt about this?

19. Santiago says that "nothing" beat him, that he simply went out too far. What is meant by this?

20. Hemingway seems to suggest that Santiago has been crucified (pp. 121-122). What is the meaning of the term? Who, or what, did this to Santiago? How does the picture of the old man, lying on his bed of newspapers with his torn hands palm up suggest victory in defeat?

21. Read the first paragraph on 107 carefully. Hemingway is suggesting a comparison there that is very important to the meaning of the story. What does he want us to think of as he describes the agony of the old man fighting a losing battle against the sharks?

22. What is the boy's attitude toward the old man when he discovers he has returned? How do the other fishermen react?

23. Read the final episode of the story (pp. 126-127). How does the point of view shift suddenly? Why do you think Hemingway introduced the tourists into the narrative?

24. Do you think that the final sentence of the novel is appropriate? In what way?

25. What is the subject of this novel? Is there more than one subject? Can you state the main idea in this novel in one or two sentences?

Suggested Exercises

Now that you have finished discussing the study questions, see if you can answer the following. You may need to reread portions of the novel very carefully.

1. When Santiago kills the marlin, this action concludes the long fight with the fish, but at the same time : the blood from the heart leaves a trail that will allow the sharks to follow the boat. Do you think this incident is necessary to the plot? Does it further the action? Does it do anything else? We say that an incident is relevant if it advances the plot, that is, if it moves the story toward a conclusion. We say that an author practices economy by carefully choosing incidents that will, as he sees it, best reveal his characters and carry the action forward. We, his readers, have a right to expect that every incident in a story or novel is there for a definite purpose. Sometimes an author uses one incident or some part of an incident more than once, in order to emphasize the main idea in his story. We call this repetition. These are three of the cardinal principles of a novelist.

   Now look back over some of the major incidents of the novel. See if you can spot some that you consider good examples of these three principles. Explain.

2. Read the passage (p. 53) in which Santiago talks to the small bird that has settled on his line. Is this incident relevant? Why do you think Hemingway inserted it?

3. An author also employs irony to good effect sometimes. Irony may be simple sarcasm. You have probably said at some time to a fellow student, "What a clever move!" when you really meant just the opposite. Irony, of course, may not always be so simple. Do you see anything ironic in one of the final incidents of the book, the episode concerning the tourist? What do you think Hemingway's attitude is here? Do you think he admires the tourists? How do you know?

4. You have already discussed the symbolism found in this novel. Actually, you were probably already familiar with the term symbol. Writers often make use of this device. Through the use of a concrete image or object, they suggest to us a complex idea. A flag may represent patriotism, a cross Christianity. Keeping the main idea of the novel in mind, see if you can decide what the following may be symbolical of in this novel.
   the old man
   the heel spur
   the sharks
   the mast which Santiago carries up the hill
   the dream about the young lions

5. Santiago fought until he captured the fish and then fought on against the last sharks even though by then he knew his cause was hopeless. This inability to acknowledge defeat is important, both in the development of Santiago as a character and in developing the theme of the novel. Find the incidents which you think Hemingway inserted to illustrate this.

6. Turn to page 124. Read the passage which begins "They beat me, Manolin. . ." and concludes". . . it was afterwards." To what is Santiago referring? Why do both feel it is important that it was "they" and not "he" who beat the old man?

7. Santiago is, by his own estimate, a strange old man. Find some incidents which you think prove this.

Suggested Compositions

1. "Man is not made for defeat," he said. "A man can be destroyed but not defeated."
   Do you agree with Santiago's statement? Can you recall any incident from your own experience or from a friend's that might back this up? Can you perhaps think of some public figure--past or present--that could be used as an illustration? If so, write a paragraph showing that "man is not made for defeat."

2. Santiago also admired the courage of animals. "We are nothing compared to the great birds and beasts." Perhaps you know of an incident that portrays the courage of an animal. If so, write a short essay to illustrate Santiago's belief that the courage to fight against great odds and to refuse to accept defeat does not belong to man alone.

3. Read the passage (p. 120) beginning "The wind is our friend . . ." and concluding". . . I went out too far.". Write a paragraph explaining what you think Santiago means by this.

4. Read several descriptive passages (descriptions of the dolphins, flying fish, the sea, etc.) Note the simplicity of the language. Are there many adverbs? Note the concrete details.

   Now, keeping in mind the examples you have just reread, write a short description of one of the following:
   A fish you have caught
   The sea on a windy day
   The woods on a snowy day

OREGON CURRICULUM STUDY CENTER

THE SHORT STORY

Literature Curriculum III

Student Version

SHORT STORIES

An Introduction

A short story demands that a reader cooperate fully, imaginatively and intellectually. Because of its very brevity and its economy, it demands from us a like intensity of concentration. Where one act or one brief expression of a character's face must make us understand theme or motive, then we the reader must be doubly alert to grasp the slightest cue from the writer. When you read "Haircut" you will note your first faint disapproval of Jim, not because the narrator condemns him, but because something strikes you as *wrong*. even on page one. Ring Lardner's irony would be lost without cooperation from you, the reader. So read a short story with care. Out of your reading will come a deeper appreciation for the art of the modern short story writer, for he works in miniature to create a work of art. Nowhere is the maxim you've encountered before so true: *How a writer says something is part of what he says*. When you read Willa Cather's *Paul's Case*, you will know a very great deal about Paul when you watch him race down the hill after the interview with the faculty. A novelist could have told us the same thing in several chapters, but Cather needs to capture Paul's fear, his anxiety, his dread of his own ugly world in an instant. She manages beautifully. The short story writer is thus always faced with this problem of capturing people and meaning and truth in a brief episode.

The short story is NOT a short novel. It was not created as an "instant" novel by twentieth century authors to save time for people too busy to read longer works, although it may be true that its brevity has increased its popularity. The short story has something in common with the lyric poem. Such a poem, you remember, catches a mood or emotion and transfers it to us. A short story catches and holds a writer's feeling about life no less surely. If it is a really fine story (as are these you will read) it also gives us insight into some event or action. We may not agree with the writer's view of things, but we will understand varying emotions and points of view without condoning them.

Read with care and attention to detail. Listen to the sound of the author's voice, to the tone that creeps into the story. When you finish, never fail to ask yourself: what is the writer saying here? He is using these people and these incidents to say something he wanted to say, something he believed in. What is he saying to *me*?

When you and the writer "make contact" you will know what reading is all about. One of the best ways to begin is to turn this page and start reading.

The Monkey's Paw

An Introduction

While you may or may not be shocked at the conclusion of this story, it is quite certain that its climax is one you will not soon forget. Plan to read the story without interruption. Note as you read what care Jacobs has taken to have his tale impart an air of credibility. The Whites are nice, ordinary people, the kind you find next door. But in spite of this, when the Sergeant-Major enters the cheerful living room, along with a cold gust from a rainstorm, we begin to feel a certain uneasiness. It would be unfair to discuss the matter further at this point, but after you've finished reading, turn to the Study Questions below and decide, during discussion, just what did go on in this unusual story.

Study Questions

1. Look at the first part of "The Monkey's Paw" again. Note that the story opens with a description of a family before a cheerful fire. Yet, in perfectly innocent fashion the author has managed to bring in a good many words that have an entirely different kind of connotation. Do you think this is just a coincidence or that it may have been planned? See how many such words you can find. To start with, there are cold, violence, and sharp.

2. Why do you think the author opened the story with such a cheerful scene?

3. Reread the passages that bring the monkey's paw into the story. How credible do you find the actions and words of Sergeant-Major Morris?

4. This story might be plotted on a curving diagram, to show its sharply rising suspense. Can you fill in the incidents on such a line?

5. Reread the first paragraph at the beginning of Part 3. Select the words you feel help to create the effect of weary resignation the author seems to desire.

6. Would you call this story one dealing primarily with character? How much character development is there?

7. Some readers prefer the idea that Herbert's death was just a coincidence and that the knocking on the door that night was another. Others feel the paw had supernatural power. Which reaction do you favor?

8. Do you think this story could have been told in the first person? Would it have been as convincing? Perhaps more so? Who, in your opinion, should have been the narrator, if it had been written in the first person? Would any major changes have been necessary in the story?

9. Mrs. White believed in the power of the paw to return her son to her. Mr. White told her the death of their son had been a coincidence and that they should not wish again. Yet he searched desperately for the paw to make that third wish. What do you think his real attitude was?

10. W. W. Jacobs wants to achieve certain effects in this story. He wants to build suspense in his reader and to create an atmosphere of horror. In order to achieve the latter effect, he uses understatement tellingly. For example, he has the old soldier hint at the grief the paw has brought to others, rather then giving us specific details. Can you find other examples of understatement?

11. This story is told in the third person. Do we see all the happenings through the eyes of one character? Or does the author let us see into the mind of each individual? Why do you think the author chose this particular point of view?

12. A short story writer must of necessity practice economy. He uses only certain incidents which will best express his ideas. Think back over the things that happen in this story. Can you think of anything that could be omitted? Why did Jacobs not tell us the reaction of Mrs. White when she saw the empty doorway? Why did he not describe the funeral? Is there anything he left out that you think should have been included? If so, explain.

13. The way an author says something might be defined as tone. We say that a person might speak in a certain tone of voice. Perhaps you have said at some time to someone: "Don't use that tone of voice with me." An author imparts tone through many devices, but one way is through the words he uses. How does Jacobs give the opening paragraph a cheerful tone? At what point does it change? How do you know?

Compositions and Exercises

1. Coincidence is often strange, although few of us have ever experienced--or are likely to--such a string of terrible ones as the Whites did. Still all of us have often heard, in the course of an ordinary conversation, the remark "What a strange coincidence!" Perhaps you, too, have had occasion to make such a remark. If so, write a few paragraphs telling about one such experience--or about one of someone you know. Arrange the facts in such a way that you will be able to create suspense. Make sure that you eliminate all needless details, just as Jacobs did. Stop the story when you have told the final important incident.

2. Words are the tools a writer must work with to create the effects he desires. You may remember the definition of a short story: an incident or a series of incidents that create a single impression in the mind of a reader. Poe, who first so defined a story, also added emphatically that every single word must contribute to this impression. In order to see how definitely words can create or distort or enlarge upon an impression, try your hand at one of the following:

Write down as many words as you can that would aid in creating an impression of (1) fear (2) gaiety (3) boredom (4) excitement. (Choose one.) Then, keeping your list before you, write a paragraph describing a man who is standing on a street corner awaiting the arrival of another person. Use as many of the words from your list as you can. When you have finished, each of you should read your paragraph aloud. If you have been successful, the same incident should change dramatically as various papers are read.

Paul's Case

Study Questions

1. Point of view is a key term this year. Having read this story, can you now determine:

   a. What the author thinks of Paul?
   b. What Paul thinks of his teachers, his minister, his father?
   c. What Paul thinks of Charley Edwards and the stock company?
   d. What the attitude of the stock company is toward Paul once the actors discover his "case?"
   e. What Paul's teachers think of him?
   f. What you think of Paul?

Can you tell how you knew these things in each case?

2. Is there a "flashback" in this story? Is there any departure from the chronological pattern in which events are arranged?

3. Why do you think Cather inserted the incident about the carnations? Does she want us to think of something other than "wilted flowers" at this point? If so, what? Why does she want us to think this?

4. We are told that Paul felt honest in his suite at the Waldorf--more so than he ever had before--in spite of his having stolen money to pay for it. Why does he feel honest?

5. Why do you think the author failed to tell us more about Paul's mother?

6. Why did it seem to Paul that "a certain element of artificiality" was necessary in beauty?

7. Read the passage on page 57 beginning "Today Paul's father.." and ending "...like herself." For what reason was this passage included? An author must include only relevant (necessary) events. Was this incident relevant? In what way?

8. What sort of person is Paul? Make a list of some of the things you learn about him in this story.

9. Why did Paul consider the "tepid water" of Cordelia Street more dreadful than jail?

10. Why did his teachers dislike Paul? Why did they feel "humiliated" as they left the building after the interview with the boy? What figure of speech does Cather employ here to make us more sympathetic to Paul? What connotations (associations) do the terms "street cat" and "ring of tormentors" have?

11. Paul, unable to solve his problems, learned to run. Cather first shows us Paul fleeing after the faculty interview, and then escaping reality in the

theater and concert hall. When these avenues were closed, Paul ran again How is the final episode in keeping with all this?

12. For Paul reality was unbearable. Cather draws a sharp contrast between Paul's lonely home and the concert hall. Reread this passage. How does the author make us feel Paul's distaste for his home?

13. In order to emphasize the intensity of Paul's aversion to his home, the author shows us that Paul would face any physical discomforts rather than endure the relative comfort of his room. What does this tell us about Paul? Is he afraid of physical pain and discomfort?

14. Can you find some examples of foreshadowing in this story?

15. Read some of the descriptions of the minor characters. Do they seem real to you?

16. Reread the last paragraph again. What incident shows that even here at this final and terrible moment, Paul felt his tormentors closing in?

17. There are several examples of metaphor and simile in the story. For example, see page 53, second paragraph. Can you find other examples elsewhere? List a few. How do they add to the effectiveness of the description?

18. Read the second paragraph on page 63. What do you think is meant by "the thing in the corner?" In what sense had Paul "flung down the gauntlet?"

Exercises

1. Find some of the things Paul hated so much. Reread the passages. Now make a list. Are all of these things ordinarily detested? Why do you think Paul disliked them?

2. Select one person you know well. Make a list of the things he dislikes and one of the things he enjoys. Just how revealing is the list? Can you draw any conclusions about the person from these lists? What are they?

3. We are known not only by our dislikes, but by the things we like as well. Paul revealed much about himself through the things he disliked, but what do you learn about him from the things which gave him pleasure? Reread the second paragraph on page 66 very carefully. What do you learn about Paul from the way he spent his time in New York?

4. Willa Cather could have told us in simple, direct statements what sort of boy Paul was. She could have made direct statements about her opinions, too. Instead, she allowed us to become acquainted with Paul as we watched him react to various situations. She allowed us to know her opinions only by the way she allowed Paul to react and the way other characters reacted to him. Do you think we understand Paul better by reading about his reactions rather than being told what kind of person he was? Just to be sure, let's try an experiment. Reread the paragraph on page fifty beginning with "...His teachers

felt..." and continue through the second paragraph on page 51. Now, read the following:

> Paul was a very nervous boy. He was frightened now but he tried not to show it. His teachers did not mean to be cruel to him, but they were.

Both passages, the one you read in the book and the one above, say nearly the same thing. There is, however, an enormous difference in the way each is said and consequently your reaction differs, too. See if you can explain exactly how the passage in the story differs from the one above. Can you explain why one is better than the other?

5. You will recall the red carnation and what Paul did with it when he walked out into the country at the conclusion of the story. Where else was a carnation mentioned? Read these passages. What "connotations" (associations) does the term have in your mind? Do you associate these flowers with gay occasions, parties, laughter, music? Paul seems to have worn one habitually. Do you think the author was telling us something important when she spoke of his carnation? What do you think is the significance of the carnation?

6. What do you think the author's purpose was in writing this story?

Writing Exercises

1. Try your hand at revealing character through the actions of a person. Avoid any unnecessary description or any outright statements regarding the person. Select a character trait (see below for suggestions) and write a paragraph in which you feel your character reveals this trait. Read the paragraph in class. Can the other students now determine what trait your character exemplified?

Cowardice
Bravery
Timidity
Insolence
Flirtatiousness
Lack of sincerity--being "two-faced."
Sympathy

2. Reread the passage on page 68 beginning "Yet somehow he was not afraid ..." and ending "...as his long fear of it had been." Can you explain the meaning of these lines? Have you ever found that some thing you feared became less fearful when you faced it? Perhaps you know of some other person who found this to be true. Write a short paragraph telling about such an experience.

3. Not everyone feels so bitter toward his environment as did Paul, but most of us have a few things we must "put up" with that are to say the least, annoying. Make your own list. Decide which is the most irritating and write a paragraph explaining why you find it so. Earlier we said our likes and dislikes are revealing. Read your paragraph again. What do you think it might reveal about you?

4. Paul often told his fellow students "tall tales" about impending visits to Naples and to Cairo. Why do you think he did this? His teachers would

probably have considered these stories outright lies. So would most people who did not know about Paul's problems. Often bad conduct is the result of complicated personal problems. Do you know of any misbehavior that resulted from unsolved problems? Tell about it.

The Cask of Amontillado
Poe

No man bears an insult gladly, but few would go so far to avenge himself as did Montresor. You will want to read this story without interruption to enjoy fully its shocking climax.

Study Questions

1. List the incidents that create the story. Note how few there are. Do you think the story would have been better if Poe had told more about the characters and more about the ending? Why? Why not?

2. Read Poe's definition of a short story. You will find it in the introduction to A Pocket Book of Short Stories, page x. Decide whether he followed his own advice. Explain.

3. What do you think Poe's pre-conceived effect was in this story? Was he successful, do you think? In what way?

4. Words have meanings, as you know, but did you know that a word has connotations as well? Such connotations expand its meaning considerably. For example, the word dark means, quite simply, without light. Yet most of us associate such unrelated things as fear, evil, the unknown, terror, lack of understanding, even cruelty. The simple word hearth means a fireplace, but we associate it with home, mother, security, warmth and friendliness. Select some of the words Poe uses and explain some of the associations they have for you. Begin with these: dusk, filmy, catacombs, damp, nitre.

5. Poe manages to brush even the work carnival with wildness. How does he accomplish this?

6. How did Montresor play upon the weakness of "his friend" to get him to go into the catacombs?

7. What effect did Montresor's urging of Furtunato to go back have upon the latter?

8. Fortunato was a connoisseur of wine and Montresor of revenge. In how many small ways do you find Montresor savoring his revenge to the fullest?

9. This story seldom arouses any sympathy for Fortunato, and, in addition, we do not become too upset when we learn Montresor has escaped punishment, although he is not a particularly lovable character. Can you think of any reasons for this?

10. Do you think the title is a good one? Why? What bearing does the wine have on the story? Is there another reason for the title?

11. We have considered the word style before. If you recall "The Tell-Tale Heart" and other stories by Poe, you will see that they have certain similarities. Consider the length of sentences, the fondness for certain words and phrases. These things are trademarks of an author's style. Make a list of some of the more noticeable elements of Poe's style. If you have already read either Twain's Roughing It or The Old Man and the Sea by Ernest Hemingway, compare Poe's style with theirs.

Writing Exercises:

1. Try creating an effect of your own. Describe a deserted house, with peeling paint and broken windows, surrounded by decaying vegetation. Discuss it as a reporter, who feels it to be a blot on the community, might. Take the same house and describe it again. This time look at it as a very old man might, if he had lived there as a child and a young man, and was now looking at it again, a half-century later. Finally, pretend you are Poe. You are about to begin a chilling story. Your first paragraph will concern a deserted house. Write several sentences describing the way the house looks. Now compare the three short paragraphs. How do the descriptions differ? What key words helped you describe the house from each point of view?

2. Have you ever been angry at someone who had hurt your feelings unnecessarily? If so, describe your reaction. Did you dream--and plot--revenge? Tell what happened.

HAIRCUT

Ring Lardner

The story you will now read is somewhat different from any you have studied before. The title may lead you astray, for while the story is about a haircut, it is also about a great deal more. As you read ask yourself the purpose of each incident. An author selects only those incidents which reveal the story he wishes to tell.

Study Questions:

1. Is the beginning of this story effective? If so, in what way?

2. Can you "diagram" this plot? What is the climax--the turning point--in the action?

3. What is the subject of this story? In what way is the subject a two-fold one?

4. The point of view in this story is somewhat complex. What is the point of view, technically speaking? Does the author speak (as himself) at all? Does he inject any attitutes or opinions of his own? Do we know how the author feels about Jim? How do we know?

5. At what point in the story did you first decide Jim was not such a fine fellow? What was the clue?

6. How does Whitey react to the trick Jim plays on him? How does he feel toward Doc Stair? Julie? Paul Dickson? How do you think the author feels about these characters?

7. Read the passage on page 174 that begins "It's a cinch..." and concludes on page 175 "...it took a lot of figurin'." Do you think this might indicate "Doc" knew what Paul intended to do, that he had in fact deliberately made the statement that "anybody that would do a thing like that ought not be be let live?" What evidence is there to the contrary?

8. The statement Whitey made--"It probably served Jim right, what he gets" --can be interpreted in two ways. Explain what Whitey probably means.

9. Lardner is careful to establish clearly, early in Whitey's story, the fact that Jim has been unkind to Paul, and that Doc Stair has been exceptionally kind. Why was this necessary?

You have encountered irony elsewhere this year and last. Can you detect any instances of irony in this story? Explain.

Exercises:

Try your hand at being a detective conducting an investigation after a crime. What evidence exists that Paul killed Jim? Is it evidence that would leave a jury without "reasonable doubt"? Write a paragraph presenting "the case" for or against Paul Dickson as you see it.

What do you think the reaction of the listener might be? (He is a character in the story, by the way, although he does not speak). If you had been "the customer" getting a haircut, what would you have said when Whitey finished? Think this over, and write a paragraph--first or third person--giving the thoughts of the listener.

OREGON CURRICULUM STUDY CENTER

INTRODUCTION TO LYRIC POETRY

Literature Curriculum III

Student Version

LYRIC POETRY

Introduction

The purpose of this unit is to give you a more formal introduction to lyric poetry than you have had so far. You have met lyric poetry before, in the seventh and eighth grades. Housman's "Loveliest of Trees," the various sea poems in the eighth grade, the poems you read in the various units on form, all these are lyrics.

What is a lyric poem? It is difficult to give a short definition, but it is possible to point out certain differences between a lyric and other forms of poetry. In the first place, a lyric is usually more personal than narrative poetry. The speaker in the poem frequently seems to be talking to himself; or if he is addressing an audience he is usually concerned with some personal attitude. Also, lyric poetry is primarily non-storied, as you observed in the eighth grade. While there may be a narrative element in some lyrics, the fundamental purpose of the lyric poem is something other than telling a story. In the eighth grade you read various narrative poems. "The Destruction of Sennacherib" is quite different from "The Man He Killed." The first is unmistakably a narrative poem; the second is really a lyric. The speaker of the latter poem is concerned with an intensely personal response to an incident, and is not so much telling a story as he is reflecting on the significance of the incident.

Inasmuch as the greatest writers have used the lyric form to convey their ideas and emotions, it is important to know how to read a lyric poem. A lyric can have any subject matter, for it ranges across all human experience. It can have any number of different verse forms and rhyme schemes. It makes use of all the various devices of language. It can range in tone from the solemn to the frivolous. Its purpose can be persuasion, description, reflection, comparison, or anything else. The poems you will read in this unit are designed to give you some familiarity with the various kinds of organization that occur in lyric poetry, the various technical devices of poetic language that poets use, the various tones or attitudes that poets take to their topics, and the various things that poets can write about. In other words, this unit gives you a more formal introduction to the wide variety of Subject, Form, and Point of View that is found in the lyric poem.

Winter

by William Shakespeare

When icicles hang by the wall,
 And Dick the shepherd blows his nail,
And Tom bears logs into the hall,
 And milk comes frozen home in pail,
When blood is nipped and ways be foul,
 Then nightly sings the staring owl,
  "Tu-whit, tu-who!"

A merry note,
While greasy Joan doth keel* the pot.

When all aloud the wind doth blow,
 And coughing drowns the parson's saw,
And birds sit brooding in the snow,
 And Marian's nose looks red and raw,
When roasted crabs⁑ hiss in the bowl,
Then nightly sings the staring owl,
  "Tu-whit, tu-who!"

A merry note,
While greasy Joan doth keel the pot.
(From Love's Labour Lost)

STUDY QUESTIONS:

1. Which of the details in the poem could not be portrayed in a painting? Which ones of our five senses does "Winter" appeal to?

2. What is meant by "the parson's saw?"

3. What is emphasized by the refrain at the end of each stanza?

4. Does the word "cold" appear in the poem? How has the poet so sharply conveyed the sensation of cold?

5. In verse or paragraph form, describe one of the other seasons. Use details and images that convey your general impression of the season, but do not state what your impression is--let your details do it for you.

"A Narrow Fellow in the Grass"

by Emily Dickinson

A narrow fellow in the grass
Occasionally rides;
You may have met him,--did you not?
His notice sudden is.

---

*skim ⁑crab apples

The grass divides as with a comb,
A spotted shaft is seen;
And then it closes at your feet
And opens further on.

He likes a boggy acre,
A floor too cool for corn.
Yet when a boy, and barefoot,
I more than once, at morn,

Have passed, I thought, a whip-lash
Unbraiding in the sun, --
When, stooping to secure it,
It wrinkled, and was gone.

Several of nature's people
I know, and they know me;
I feel for them a transport
Of cordiality;

But never met this fellow,
Attended or alone,
Without a tighter breathing,
And zero at the bone.

STUDY QUESTIONS:

1. What is the subject of the poem?

2. The poem may be divided into two parts. Where would you draw the line? Why?

3. Which verbs in the poem convey movement? In what way are they effective verbs for the subject of this poem?

4. What other words, besides the verbs, suggest movement? Can you identify the simile and the metaphor?

5. Why does the poet alter the position of the last two words in stanza 1? Does this shift in any way contribute to the idea expressed in that line?

6. What is your attention mainly drawn to in stanza 2? Why?

7. In stanza 3 what two "snakelike qualities" are suggested?

8. What is meant by the phrase "a transport of cordiality?" How would you explain, in other terms, the poet's attitude toward most of "nature's people?"

9. What is the poet's feeling toward the "narrow fellow in the grass?"

Which phrase or phrases most directly convey(s) this feeling? Is there anything in the first four stanzas to support that feeling?

10. Look back over the poem and count the times that the snake actually "appears" in the poem. If you actually "experienced" the snake, as most readers do while reading this poem, how do you account for that fact?

11. Does Dickinson employ a regular rhyme scheme here? Describe the pattern she uses.

12. See how many examples of alliteration you can find.

"The Eagle"

by Alfred Lord Tennyson

He clasps the crag with crooked hands;
Close to the sun in lonely lands,
Ringed with the azure world,he stands.

The wrinkled sea beneath him crawls;
He watches from his mountain walls,
And like a thunderbolt he falls.

STUDY QUESTIONS:

1. If a camera were to focus upon the eagle for a still shot, what details in the poem would have to be omitted?

2. Notice the repetition of the hard "c" sound. This repetition of the same consonant sound at the beginning of words is called "alliteration." Does this sound convey a certain impression? What is it? How does it "fit" the eagle?

3. Why does Tennyson use the word "wrinkled" to describe the sea? To what is he comparing the sea? As you probably know, this kind of comparison is called "metaphor"--a word usually associated with one kind of thing is applied to another without any direct expression of comparison or similarity between the two.

4. What comparison do you find in line 6? How is this kind of comparison different from metaphor? This particular figure of speech is called a "simile."

5. What would be the effect of a punctuation mark within the last line?

6. Notice the rhyme scheme. Is there any relationship between the strict rhyme and the subject of the poem? Explain.

7. What qualities of the eagle does Tennyson suggest in his poem? What quality dominates our impression of the eagle?

"To a Waterfowl"

by William Cullen Bryant

Whither, midst falling dew,
While glow the heavens with the last steps of day,
Far, through their rosy depths, dost thou pursue
Thy solitary way?

Vainly the fowler's eye
Might mark thy distant flight to do thee wrong,
As, darkly seen against the crimson sky,
Thy figure floats along.

Seek'st thou the plashy brink
Of weedy lake, or marge of river wide,
Or where the rocking billows rise and sink
On the chafed ocean side?

There is a power whose care
Teaches thy way along that pathless coast, --
The desert and illimitable air, --
Lone wandering, but not lost.

All day thy wings have fanned,
At that far height, the cold, thin atmosphere,
Yet stoop not, weary, to the welcome land,
Though the dark night is near.

And soon that toil shall end;
Soon shalt thou find a summer home, and rest,
And scream among thy fellows; reeds shall bend,
Soon o'er thy sheltered nest.

Thou'rt gone, the abyss of heaven
Hath swallowed up thy form; yet, on my heart
Deeply hath sunk the lesson thou hast given,
And shall not soon depart.

He who, from zone to zone,
Guides through the boundless sky thy certain flight,
In the long way that I must tread alone,
Will lead my steps aright.

STUDY QUESTIONS:

1. Why is the poem set in the early evening?

2. Why does Bryant devote the third stanza to a description of where the bird might go?

3. What is Bryant comparing the bird to?

4. Point out the different images in the poem.

5. Why does stanza 4 have no concrete images?

6. What does the bird mean to Bryant?

"The Tables Turned"
An Evening Scene on the Same Subject
by William Wordsworth

Up, up! my friend, and quit your books;
Or surely you'll grow double:
Up! up! my friend, and clear your looks;
Why all this toil and trouble?

The sun, above the mountain's head,
A freshening lustre mellow
Through all the long green fields has spread,
His first sweet evening yellow.

Books! 'tis a dull and endless strife:
Come, hear the woodland linnet,
How sweet his music! on my life
There's more of wisdom in it.

And hark! how blithe the throstle sings!
He, too, is no mean preacher:
Come forth into the light of things,
Let Nature be your teacher.

She has a world of ready wealth,
Our minds and hearts to bless--
Spontaneous wisdom breathed by health,
Truth breathed by cheerfulness.

One impulse from a vernal wood
May teach you more of man,
Of moral evil and of good,
Than all the sages can.

Sweet is the lore which Nature brings;
Our meddling intellect
Misshapes the beauteous forms of things:--
We murder to dissect.

Enough of Science and of Art;
Close up these barren leaves;
Come forth, and bring with you a heart
That watches and receives.

STUDY QUESTIONS:

1. What is meant by "surely you'll grow double" and "clear your looks" in stanza 1?

2. What is the subject of the sentence in stanza 2?

3. How many specific aspects of nature does Wordsworth mention in the poem?

4. What way of life does Wordsworth object to in this poem? For what reasons? What way of life does he advocate? Why?

5. Pick out three or four lines which in your opinion best sum up his attitude.

6. In stanza 6 Wordsworth says that a person will learn more about good and evil from walking in the woods than from studying the opinions of philosophers. What suggestion of this idea has he given in the preceding stanzas?

7. The last line of stanza 7 is often quoted. What does it mean? How does the meddling intellect misshape the beauteous form of things? Do you think this is true? If not, how would you try to convince Wordsworth?

"The Passionate Shepherd to His Love"

by Christopher Marlowe

Come live with me and be my love,
And we will all the pleasures prove,
That valleys, groves, hills and fields,
Woods or steepy mountains yields.

And we will sip upon the rocks,
Seeing the shepherds feed their flocks
By shallow rivers, to whose falls
Melodious birds sing madrigals.

And I will make thee beds of roses,
And a thousand fragrant posies,
A cap of flowers and a kirtle
Embroidered all wilth leaves of myrtle;

A gown made of the finest wool,
Which from our pretty lambs we pull;
Fair-lined slippers for the cold,
With buckles of the purest gold;

A belt of straw and ivy buds,
With coral clasps and amber studs;
And if these pleasures may thee move,
Come live with me and be my love.

The shepherd swains shall dance and sing
For thy delight each May morning;
If these delights thy mind may move,
Then live with me and be my love.

"The Nymph's Reply to the Shepherd"
by Sir Walter Raleigh

If all the world and love were young
And truth in every shepherd's tongue,
These pretty pleasures might me move
To live with thee and be thy love.

Time drives the flocks from field to fold
When rivers rage and rocks grow cold,
And Philomel becometh dumb;
The rest complain of cares to come.

The flowers do fade, and wanton fields
To wayward winter reckoning yields;
A honey tongue, a heart of gall,
Is fancy's spring, but sorrow's fall.

Thy gowns, thy shoes, thy beds of roses,
Thy cap, thy kirtle, and thy posies
Soon break, soon wither, soon forgotten,
In folly ripe, in reason rotten.

Thy belt of straw and ivy buds,
Thy coral clasps and amber studs,
All these in me no means can move
To come to thee and be thy love.

But could youth last and love still breed,
Had joys no date nor age no need,
Then these delights my mind might move
To live with thee and be thy love.

STUDY QUESTIONS:

1. Why does Marlowe talk only about roses, lambs, ivy buds, etc., instead of cold, fading flowers, and silent birds?

2. What is wrong with Raleigh's view of nature?

3. Why are the rhyme and meter so regular in both poems?

"Shall I Compare Thee"

by William Shakespeare

Shall I compare thee to a Summer's day?
Thou art more lovely and more temperate:
Rough winds do shake the darling buds of May,
And Summer's lease hath all too short a date:
Sometime too hot the eye of heaven shines,
And often is his gold complexion dimm'd;
And every fair from fair sometime declines,
By chance or nature's changing course untrimm'd:

But thy eternal Summer shall not fade
Nor lose possession of that fair thou ow'st;
Nor shall Death brag thou wander'st in his shade,
When in eternal lines to time thou grow'st:
So long as men can breathe, or eyes can see,
So long lives this, and this gives life to thee.

STUDY QUESTIONS:

1. Line 3 mentions the month of May. What does this line have to do with line 4?

2. What does the word "temperate" mean (line 2)? Is temperance or intemperance suggested anywhere else in the poem?

3. What figure of speech does Shakespeare employ in lines 5 and 6?

4. What is meant by the phrase "every fair from fair declines?"

5. The poem begins with a question. How does he answer it? For what reasons?

6. What figure of speech do you find in line 11?

7. Restate line 12 in your own words. How can something "grow to time?"

8. What does "this" refer to in line 14?

9. Is the poet bragging in the last two lines? Why or why not?

10. What does the poet finally compare the woman to? Explain your answer.

11. What is the rhyme scheme of the poem? How many "sections" does the poem seem to have? Each rhymed group of four lines is called a "quatrain," and the final two lines are called a "couplet." All of Shakespeare's sonnets are written in this form. What function does the couplet serve in this poem--does it summarize what has already been said, does it add something new, or does it contradict what has been said before?

12. Does the poem have a regular rhythm? Is there any variation in the rhythm? How many metrical feet do you find in each line? The rhythm of this poem, too, is typical of the sonnet form--what you have said about this sonnet can be said about any sonnet written in Shakespearian form.

"My Mistress' Eyes"
by William Shakespeare

My mistress' eyes are nothing like the sun;
Coral is far more red than her lips' red;
If snow be white, why then her breasts are dun;
If hairs be wires, black wires grow on her head.
I have seen roses damask'd, red and white,
But no such roses see I in her cheeks;
And in some perfumes is there more delight
Than in the breath that from my mistress reeks.

I love to hear her speak, yet well I know
That music hath a far more pleasing sound;
I grant I never saw a goddess go;
My mistress, when she walks, treads on the ground:
And yet, by heaven, I think my love as rare
As any she belied with false compare.

STUDY QUESTIONS:

1. What type of figure of speech do you find in lines 1 and 2? What makes it difficult to recognize?

2. What does "dun" mean?

3. Look up "damask" in the dictionary. What, then, does "damasked" mean in the poem?

4. What pattern do you notice in the way the poet presents details about his mistress? What do you think his purpose was?

5. Why do you suppose Shakespeare mentions a "goddess" in line 11? Does he compare his mistress to a goddess? What reason does he give?

6. Does the poet compliment his mistress in the poem? If so, where?

7. How do the words "belied," "false," and "compare" relate to the rest of the poem?

8. Does the final couplet provide a summary, a resolution, or a contradiction to the rest of the sonnet? Explain your answer.

9. Compare the rhyme scheme and the metrical pattern with those of the sonnet "Shall I Compare Thee."

"Sweet Disorder"

by Robert Herrick

A sweet disorder in the dress
Kindles in clothes a wantonness:
A lawn about the shoulders thrown
Into a fine distraction--
An erring lace, which here and there
Enthrals the crimson stomacher--
A cuff neglectful, and thereby
Ribbands to flow confusedly--
A winning wave, deserving note,
In the tempestuous petticoat--
A careless shoe-string, in whose tie
I see a wild civility--
Do more bewitch me than when art
Is too precise in every part.

STUDY QUESTIONS:

1. How many examples of "sweet disorder in the dress" are mentioned in the poem? What is the subject of the verb phrase "do more bewitch me" in line 13?

2. As this poem was written 300 years ago, naturally some of the words may be unfamiliar to you. Guess at the meanings of "lawn," "ribands," and "stomacher"; then consult your dictionary.

3. The dictionary will tell you the various meanings of "wanton". Which do you think Herrick had in mind in line 2? Why?

4. "Distraction," too, has several shades of meaning. Which do you suppose Herrick had in mind in line 4? The phrase "a fine distraction" seems to be self-contradictory. Can you resolve this contradiction in light of the subject of the poem? Why does the poem use "fine" rather than "nice," "pretty," or some other similar word?

5. How is the phrase "a wild civility" in line 12 similar to "a fine distraction"? Ask your teacher to explain the term "paradox."

6. What is "lace" compared to in line 5? What is "cuff" compared to in line 7? What special kind of metaphor is Herrick using in these two lines? Do you see any other examples of the same kind of comparison in the poem

7. Check your dictionary for the meanings of "enthralls." Does the word perhaps have two meanings as it is used in line 6? What is the term you learned for such a "play on words"?

8. What specific words, if any, suggest that the speaker of the poem is in love?

9. What is the rhyme scheme of the poem? What are rhymed pairs of lines called? Describe the rhythm of the poem. What regular patterns,

besides rhyme and rhythm, do you notice in the poem?

10. How do you think Herrick pronounced "confusedly" and "civility"?

11. What relationship can you see between the subject of the poem and the form? Does the poet in any way contradict himself?

"The Constant Lover"

by Sir John Suckling

Out upon it, I have loved
  Three whole days together!
And am like to love three more,
  If it prove fair weather.

Time shall moult away his wings
  Ere he shall discover
In the whole wide world again
  Such a constant lover.

But the spite on't is, no praise
  Is due at all to me:
Love with me had made no stays,
  Had it any been but she.

Had it any been but she,
  And that very face,
There had been at least ere this
  A dozen dozen in her place.

STUDY QUESTIONS:

1. What is the poet's definition of a "constant" lover?

2. What is the metaphor in stanza 2? How is the comparison appropriate to the poem?

3. In stanza 3 . the speaker says "no praise / Is due at all to me." No praise for what? To whom, then, is praise due? Restate, in your own words, the last two lines of stanza 3.

4. What does the poet mean by the last two lines in stanza 4? Why does he exaggerate in the last line?

5. Does the speaker's tone of voice change at any point in the poem? If so, where? Explain your answer.

6. Would you describe this poem as basically serious or whimsical? Why?

7. What is the author's attitude toward love? Toward himself as a lover? Support your answer by referring to specific points in the poem.

OREGON CURRICULUM STUDY CENTER

LYRIC POETRY, PART TWO

Literature Curriculum III

Student Version

Student Version

Lyric Poetry

Introduction

Writers communicate to their readers in a variety of ways about a variety of subjects. You have just studied Mark Twain's Roughing It, a prose account of the author's journey across the Great Plains and the Rocky Mountains to Carson City, a frontier mining town in Nevada. Roughing It involves, as you recall, much more than an account of an actual journey; and the form of the book and the author's point of view demand careful attention.

In this unit, you will see how other authors have written about journeys, both actual and imaginary. The selections here differ from Twain's Roughing It in one very important way: poetry rather than prose is the medium of communication.

Much of what you have learned about prose can be applied when you study poetry. Subject, form, and point of view, as you saw in Roughing It, work together. In poetry, the subject of a poem can be approached as a separate study; the many poetic elements of form (rhythm, rhyme, symbol, imagery, and so on) can be examined separately; and the poet's point of view can be analyzed and discussed. But eventually the poem must be viewed as a whole. Like a flower or a building or a painting, a poem or other literary work is the sum of all of its parts.

Each poem in this unit is about a journey, but you will see very quickly that there are many kinds of journeys, some of which you yourself may have experienced. Perhaps even now you are planning a trip you hope to take soon or dreaming about a journey you have already taken. It may be that all your traveling has, up to this point in your life, been in the realm of your imagination. If you read Roughing It with care, you were really riding with Mark Twain as he traveled westward in a stagecoach. Such a book provides the reader with a vicarious experience which means simply that the reader enters the world of the story or poem. Many worlds into which you may enter are presented in this unit. Poets sometimes view a single human life as a kind of journey, a passing from birth to death. Nature too is seen as a traveler. A river, for example, following its course from source to sea or a spider weaving its web are, in a very broad sense, journeying. Because poets sometimes see in nature's patterns subject matter for poetry, you will find that some of the poems in this unit deal with the journey of a river or a spider or a brook.

You will be asked certain questions which will help you to understand the subject, form, and point of view of each of the poems which follow. But the real test of your response to any study lies in the questions you ask. There is no doubt that answering questions requires knowledge, but asking them requires imagination, and imagination is certainly the instrument of the poet. Let yours work for you.

"There Is No Frigate like a Book"

by Emily Dickinson

There is no frigate like a book
To take us lands away
Nor any coursers like a page
Of prancing poetry.
This traverse may the poorest take
Without oppress of toll
How frugal is the chariot
That bears a human soul!

Questions

1. Read "There Is No Frigate like a Book" and state what you think this poem is about.
2. How may images can you identify? What kind of travel images does she present?
3. Do you see any difference between the images in the first four lines and the images in the second four lines? In other words, does Emily Dickinson move from the specific to the general or from the general to the specific?
4. Why is the word "frigate" appropriate to represent a book? Why is "coursers" appropriate for poetry?
5. A poet is expected to be accurate. What do you think of the phrase "prancing poetry"?
6. Do you see anything different about the word arrangement in the following:
    a) "To take us lands away"
    b) "This traverse may the poorest take"
    c) "Without oppress of toll"
    d) "How frugal is the chariot"
7. Very little punctuation is necessary in this poem. How does this affect the way it is read?
8. What can you surmise about the author of this poem? Ask yourself such questions as the following. Are her tastes extravagant? Is

she imaginative? Does the poem picture her as a meek, docile person? Find evidence in the poem to support your answer.

9. What is Emily Dickinson's point of view toward books? Recall the imagery in the poem.

"On First Looking Into Chapman's Homer"

by John Keats

Much have I travelled in the realms of gold,
And many goodly states and kingdoms seen;
Round many western islands have I been
Which bards in fealty to Apollo hold.
Oft of one wide expanse had I been told
That deep-browed Homer ruled as his demesne;
Yet did I never breathe its pure serene
Till I heard Chapman speak out loud and bold:
Then felt I like some watcher of the skies
When a new planet swims into his ken;
Or like stout Cortez when with eagle eyes
He stared at the Pacific--and all his men
Looked at each other with a wild surmise--
Silent, upon a peak in Darien.

Questions

1. How would you explain the fact that this poem divides into two parts? How are they related to each other?

2. To what do you think "realms of gold" refers? "Round many western islands"? "Demesne"?

3. How would you explain line four?

4. What line of the first eight lines indicates more than any other that Keats is employing a major metaphor? What is this metaphor? How effective is this imagery in terms of space and movement?

5. What do terms such as "watcher of the skies," "swims," "with eagle eyes" do to the imagery in the last six lines?

6. Even though Balboa, not Cortez, discovered the Pacific, does this error change the value of the poem? Why or why not?

7. Study the rhyme scheme of this sonnet. Does it in any way contribute to the meaning of the poem? Explain.

8. How would you describe the development of feeling in Keats' sonnet?

What does the final line do to this feeling?

9. Considering the briefness of the sonnet form and the size of Keats' subject, what can you say about Keats' achievement in this poem? Does he successfully fit one to the other or not?

10. How does the poet view Chapman's translation of Homer? What new understandings and attitudes does Keats have after reading the translation by Chapman? What qualities in this translation helped to bring about these understandings in Keats? What is the significance of Keats' identification with astronomers and explorers who experienced moments of discovery? How does Keats feel now that he too is a "discoverer".

"O Captain! My Captain!"

by Walt Whitman

O Captain! my Captain! our fearful trip is done,
The ship has weather'd every rack, the prize we sought is won,
The port is near, the bells I hear, the people all exulting,
While follow eyes the steady keel, the vessel grim and daring;
But O heart! heart! heart!
O the bleeding drops of red,
Where on the deck my Captain lies,
Fallen cold and dead.

O Captain! my Captain! rise up and hear the bells;
Rise up--for you the flag is flung--for you the bugle trills,
For you bouquets and ribbon'd wreaths--for you the shores a-crowding,
For you they call, the swaying mass, their eager faces turning;
Here Captain! dear father!
The arm beneath your head!
It is some dream that on the deck,
You've fallen cold and dead.

My Captain does not answer, his lips are pale and still,
My father does not feel my arm, he has no pulse nor will,
The ship is anchor'd safe and sound, its voyage closed and done,
From fearful trip the victor ship comes in with object won;
Exult O shores, and ring O bells!
But I with mournful tread,
Walk the deck my Captain lies,
Fallen cold and dead.

Questions

1. Read the poem "O Captain! My Captain!" and write six sentences telling what you think happens in this twenty-four line poem. You will find it helpful to make your sentences correspond to the six, four-line units that make up the poem.

2. Each of the three stanzas concludes with four lines that are very different in form from the first four lines. What is the rhyme pattern in the second four lines? What is the stress pattern? What kind of stanza could this be called?

3. Longfellow's poem "The Ship of State" concludes with the following lines:

   Thou, too, sail on, O Ship of State!
   Sail on, O Union, strong and great!
   Humanity with all its fears,
   With all the hopes of future years,
   Is hanging breathless on thy fate!
   We know what Master laid thy keel,
   What Workmen wrought thy ribs of steel,
   Who made each mast, and sail, and rope,
   What anvils rang, what hammers beat,
   In what a forge, and what a heat
   Were shaped the anchors of thy hope!
   Fear not each sudden sound and shock,
   'Tis of the wave and not the rock;
   'Tis but the flapping of the sail,
   And not a rent made by the gale!
   In spite of rock and tempest's roar,
   In spite of false lights on the shore,
   Sail on, nor fear to breast the sea!
   Our hearts, our hopes, are all with thee,
   Our hearts, our hopes, our prayers, our tears,
   Our faith triumphant o'er our fears,
   Are all with thee - are all with thee!

   In this passage, the poet is using the ship as a symbol for the nation. Could Walt Whitman be using the ship in the same way in "O Captain! My Captain!"? Find out when Walt Whitman lived. When did the Civil War take place? Who was the President of the United States during the Civil War? How did Abraham Lincoln meet his death? Do you think that "O Captain! My Captain!" is about Abraham Lincoln? Write a paragraph stating what you think this poem is really about.

4. In answering the second question, you observed the differences in form between the first four lines and the last four lines in each stanza. There are also contrasts or contradictions in the content of the first four lines and the last four. Discuss these differences. The use of such contrasts is a conscious device of the writer known as antithesis, which we can define as an opposition or contrast of ideas. Considering the subject of "O Captain! My Captain!" do you think Whitman's use of antithesis was wise? How does the

difference in form between the first four lines and the last four lines in each stanza together with the use of antithesis contribute to the total effect of the poem?

"Stopping By Woods On A Snowy Evening"

by Robert Frost

(For text, see Complete Poems of Robert Frost; Holt, Rinehart, & Winston, New York, 1964; p. 275.)

Questions

1. Where is the narrator and what is he doing?

2. Does he seem to be at home in his surroundings?

3. Why did he stop? Is this clearly stated in the poem?

4. Why might his horse think it queer to stop in this lonely but beautiful spot? What might the owner think about someone stopping in his woods? Does stanza one suggest personality differences of both men?

5. Notice the concrete imagery in stanzas one and two. What do they have in common? How do the concrete words in stanza three differ from those in stanzas one and two?

6. Determine the rhyme scheme of these three stanzas. In what way does it help shape the various images presented?

7. Could Robert Frost have ended his poem with the third stanza?

8. Read the complete poem. What would you say is the attitude of the narrator toward his subject?

9. Study the final stanza. Might the narrator be concerned with more than just the experience of enjoying a lovely natural scene? Notice all the long vowels in this stanza. What do they tend to do to the line? Why is the last line repeated?

10. Now work back through the poem. Might the following words represent something beside their literal meanings: "woods," "dark," "easy-wind," "downy flake," "house"?

11. What promises in life must one keep?

12. How do you interpret "sleep"?

13. How far must one travel before he sleeps?

"The Song of the Chattahoochee"

by Sidney Lanier

Out of the hills of Habersham,
Down the valleys of Hall,
I hurry amain to reach the plain,
Run the rapid and leap the fall,
Split at the rock and together again,
Accept my bed, or narrow or wide,
And flee from folly on every side
With a lover's pain to attain the plain
Far from the hills of Habersham,
Far from the valleys of Hall.

All down the hills of Habersham,
All through the valleys of Hall,
The rushes cried, Abide, abide,
The willful waterweeds held me thrall,
The laving laurel turned by tide,
The ferns and the fondling grass said Stay,
The dewberry dipped for to work delay,
And the little reeds sighed, Abide, abide,
Here in the hills of Habersham,
Here in the valleys of Hall.

High o'er the hills of Habersham,
Veiling the valleys of Hall,
The hickory told me manifold
Fair tales of shade, the poplar tall
Wrought me her shadowy self to hold,
The chestnut, the oak, the walnut, the pine,
Overleaning, with flickering meaning and sign,
Said, Pass not, so cold, these manifold
Deep shades of the hills of Habersham,
These glades in the valleys of Hall.

And oft in the hills of Habersham,
And oft in the valleys of Hall,
The white quartz shone, and the smooth brook-stone
Did bar me of passage with friendly brawl,
And many a luminous jewel lone
- Crystals clear or a-cloud with mist,
Ruby, garnet, and amethyst -
Made lures with the lights of streaming stone
In the clefts of the hills of Habersham,
In the beds of the valleys of Hall.

But oh, not the hills of Habersham,
And oh, not the valleys of Hall
Avail: I am fain for to water the plain.
Downward the voices of Duty call -
Downward, to toil and be mixed with the main;
The dry fields burn, and the mills are to turn,
And a myriad flowers mortally yearn,
And the lordly main from beyond the plain
Calls o'er the hills of Habersham,
Calls through the valleys of Hall.

Glossary

Habersham and Hall	:	counties in Lanier's native state of Georgia
amain (á - mā́n)	:	at full speed.
thrall (thrôl)	:	enslaved
manifold	:	plentiful and varied, as in "our manifold benefits."
I am fain	:	poetic for "I desire" or "I wish."
main	:	poetic for the sea.

Questions

1. The Chatahoochee River rises in Habersham County in northeastern Georgia, Sidney Lanier's home state, and flows southwest through the adjoining county of Hall. To whom or what does "I" refer in line three? What figure of speech is employed when an inanimate object or abstract idea is given personal attributes? List other examples of this figure of speech which you find in this poem.

2. Stanzas in poetry often perform the function of paragraphs in prose. Write five brief paragraphs that relate what is happening in each stanza.

3. Stanza one gives a fairly full description of the path of the Chattahoochee. List specific details.

4. Although the river is singing the song of its journey, the reader can certainly parallel the river's journey with his own life. What is the poet saying about devotion to duty or about facing the temptations of life that call man from his duty? Can you identify the three kinds of temptations presented in stanzas 2, 3, and 4?

5. List the last word of each line in the five stanzas and indicate the rhyme scheme. What effect is achieved by having lines nine and ten rhyme with lines one and two? What effect is achieved by having the same rhyme scheme in each stanza?

6. In addition to the complex end-rhyme scheme, Sidney Lanier introduced rhymes within the lines. This method of achieving sound effects is called internal rhyme. List several examples of internal rhyme.

7. Among the devices the poet uses to achieve musicality is alliteration. Locate several examples of its use.

8. The words "hills of Habersham" and "valley of Hall" appear in the first, second, ninth, and tenth lines of each stanza. Poets use repetition to achieve sound effects and sometimes to advance the action. Thus, in stanza three, lines one and two talk about locale; lines nine and ten complete line eight and advance the action. Can you recall the technical name for repetition which not only repeats something from a preceding stanza but also varies the line and advances the meaning of the narrative? What kind of poem employs this kind of repetition frequently?

9. In the opening stanza, the river is described as hurrying "with a lover's pain to attain the plain." In the closing stanza, duty directs the river toward its goal. Do you think love and duty are basically the same? What motives does man have in performing the duties of his particular state in life?

10. Does the poet seem to moralize or is the poem handled in such a way that the obvious parallel between the life of the river and the life of man does not tend to dominate the poem? If it does dominate, does this seem to weaken the poem?

11. "The Song of the Brook" by Alfred Lord Tennyson is similar to "The Song of the Chattahoochee" in that the brook tells of its journey as does Lanier's river. Read Tennyson's poem carefully and see if you can discover the basic difference between this poem and Lanier's. Do not concern yourself with obvious differences in form.

"The Song of the Brook"

by Alfred Lord Tennyson

I come from haunts of coot and hern,
   I make a sudden sally,
And sparkle out among the fern,
   To bicker down a valley.

By thirty hills I hurry down,
  Or slip between the ridges,
By twenty thorps, a little town,
  And half a hundred bridges.

Till last by Philip's farm I flow
  To join the brimming river,
For men may come and men may go,
  But I go on for ever.

I chatter over stony ways,
  In little sharps and trebles,
I bubble into eddying bays,
  I babble on the pebbles.

With many a curve my banks I fret
  By many a field and fallow,
And many a fairy foreland set
  With willow-weed and mallow.

I chatter, chatter, as I flow
  To foin the brimming river,
For men may come and men may go,
  But I go on for ever.

I wind about, and in and out,
  With here a blossom sailing,
And here and there a lusty trout,
  And here and there a grayling,

And here and there a foamy flake
  Upon me, as I travel
With many a silvery water-break
  Above the golden gravel,

And draw them all along, and flow
  To join the brimming river,
For men may come and men may go,
  But I go on for ever.

I steal by lawns and grassy plots,
  I slide by hazel covers;
I move the sweet forget-me-nots
  That grow for happy lovers.

I slip, I slide, I gloom, I glance,
  Among my skimming swallows;
I make the netted sunbeam dance
  Against my sandy shallows.

I murmur under moon and stars
   In brambly wildernesses;
I linger by my shingly bars
   I loiter round my crosses;

And out again I curve and flow
   To join the brimming river,
For men may come and men may go,
   But I go on for ever.

"The Chambered Nautilus"

by Oliver Wendell Holmes

This is the ship of pearl, which, poets feign,
   Sails the unshadowed main, --
      The venturous bark that flings
On the sweet summer wind its purpled wings
In gulfs enchanted, where the Siren sings,
   And coral reefs lie bare,
Where the cold sea-maids rise to sun their streaming hair.

Its webs of living gauze no more unfurl;
   Wrecked is the ship of pearl!
   And every chambered cell,
Where its dim dreaming life was wont to dwell,
As the frail tenant shaped his growing shell,
   Before thee lies revealed, --
Its irised ceiling rent, its sunless crypt unsealed!

Year after year beheld the silent toil
   That spread his lustrous coil;
   Still, as the spiral grew,
He left the past year's dwelling for the new,
Stole with soft step its shining archway through,
   Built up its idle door,
Stretched in his last-found home, and knew the old no more.

Thanks for the heavenly message brought by thee,
   Child of the wandering sea,
   Cast from her lap, forlorn!
From thy dead lips a clearer note is born
Than ever Triton blew from wreathèd horn!
   While on mine ear it rings,
Through the deep caves of thought I hear a voice that sings:--

Build thee more stately mansions, O my soul,
    As the swift seasons roll!
    Leave thy low-vaulted past!
Let each new temple, nobler than the last,
Shut thee from heaven with a dome more vast,
    Till thou at length art free,
Leaving thine outgrown shell by life's unresting sea!

Questions

1. Many poets are close observers of nature and find in nature a source of inspiration. Oliver Wendell Holmes is such a poet. Read "The Chambered Nautilus" carefully and then consider the following:

    (a) What colors does the poet observe in the shell?
    (b) Describe the usual habitat of the nautilus.
    (c) What unique habits does the nautilus have?
    (d) Why does the poet call the nautilus his "child of the wandering sea"?
    (e) What does the poet tell his soul?

2. The poet does not tell you very much about the "I" in his poem, but you are always free to speculate and to form definite opinions which you can defend by specific reference to the poem. With this in mind, answer the following questions:

    (a) Do you think the poet, Holmes, and the speaker in the poem are the same person? Can you defend your opinion by specific reference to the poem, or is your answer mere speculation? Is your understanding of the poem lessened if you do not know who "I" is? On the other hand, would you have understood "O Captain! My Captain!" if you did not know about Walt Whitman?

    (b) Where does the poem take place? Is this a sea coast setting? Or is the setting the writer's study? What other settings might be possible?

    (c) Do you think there is more than one person in the poem?

    (d) What kind of person is the speaker?

3. What is the rhyme scheme in this poem?

4. Much of the poetic quality of the poem depends on the use of alliteration. Find as many examples of alliteration as you can.

5. Consider the poem's structure. Obviously, there are five stanzas, but do you see another logical division in the poem which is determined by the content of the poem and by the attitude of the writer?

6. Do you think the lesson the poet learned from the nautilus is a good

one? Should a basketball player try to improve his game each year he plays? Should a doctor hope to be more skillful in his tenth year of practice than he was in his first? Should a student like yourself try to improve each year? In what specific ways?

7. The poet speaks of his soul becoming free when it leaves its "outgrown shell by life's unresting sea." Do you think the poet means to imply that man will never know freedom or joy until after he dies? Or does he imply that over-attachment to the world and the things of the world imprison man's real self?

"A Noiseless Patient Spider"

by Walt Whitman

A noiseless patient spider,
I mark'd where on a little promontory it stood isolated,
Mark'd how to explore the vacant vast surrounding,
It launch'd forth filament, filament, filament, out of itself.
Ever unreeling them, ever tirelessly speeding them.

And you O my soul where you stand,
Surrounded, detached, in measureless oceans of space,
Ceaselessly musing, venturing, throwing, seeking the spheres to connect them.
Till the bridge you will need be form'd, till the ductile anchor hold,
Till the gossamer thread you fling catch somewhere, O my soul.

Questions

1. Whitman doesn't describe the physical appearance of the spider, but he gives the reader a clear picture of its habits and characteristics. List as many of these as you can.

2. Whitman uses the spider's experiences to illuminate the experiences of his soul. Do you feel that the poet is optimistic about the final accomplishments of his soul? Give reasons for your answers.

3. The second stanza is not complete in the sense that a sentence fragment is used. Can you think why Whitman might have written the stanza this way?

4. Does the poet use end rhyme? Is there any uniform pattern of stressed and unstressed syllables in this poem? Ask your teacher to tell you the technical name given to a poem that has no end rhyme and no specific rhyme pattern.

5. A nursery rhyme which you heard as a child may have helped to color

your attitude toward spiders. Remember how little Miss Muffit was frightened by a spider and ran away? Does Whitman's poem have any effect on your attitude toward spiders? Explain.

6. Can you find any words in the poem which, taken out of context, seem harsh or not suitable to poetry?

7. Do you think the repetition of several words has any effect on the total poem? Explain.

"Sea Fever"

by John Masefield

(For text, see The Collected Poems of John Masefield; Wm. Heinemann, Ltd., London, 1938; pp. 26-27.)

Questions

1. In a few sentences sum up what this poem is about.

2. Read the poem again. What can you discover about the narrator? Is he young or old? Is he still sailing the seas? Is he relating a particular voyage? What phases of a sailor's life does he suggest in each stanza?

3. In the first stanza the imagery appeals to what sense? In the second stanza? How are the images of stanza three different from those in stanzas one and two? To what do these images appeal? Which stanza presents the most general images?

4. The early inhabitants of England (Anglo-Saxons) used compound words, called kennings, in their poetry to create a very condensed picture of what they wanted to say. For example the famous Anglo-Saxon

story poem Beowulf has this quality. Its hero Beowulf is sometimes called "wave-splitter" (he was an excellent swimmer); the ocean is called "whale-road," and a ship is called "oar-steed." Can you locate any word pictures in "Sea Fever" that remind you of the Anglo-Saxon kennings?

5. Does the last line of the poem suggest more than one meaning? What additional meaning would you give to "sleep"? What does "the long trick" mean? What additional meaning might it imply?

6. Scan the poem. Try to determe : the two basic patterns of meter. Read the first line of the poem in a natural manner. Do you read it in the following manner?

   Ĭ múst gŏ dówn tŏ thĕ séa ăgáin, tŏ thĕ lónĕly séa ănd thĕ ský.

   How many stresses are in this line? Notice the two types of feet: the iamb (˘/) and the anapest (˘˘/). Now see whether the remaining lines of the poem contain seven stresses to each line and a similar rhythm pattern. Which seems to be the more important foot, the iamb or the anapest? Why do you think John Masefield chose this rhythm for his subject?

7. What sort of rhyme scheme appears in each stanza? In stanza one, "sky" and "by" rhyme and "shaking" and "breaking" rhyme. How would you mark them? Does this pattern hold true for stanzas two and three?

8. Sometimes poets will arrange to have an unstressed syllable at the end of a line. The syllable is called a feminine ending. Line three in stanza one illustrates this:

   "And the wheel's kick and the wind's song and the white sail's
   shaking"

   How many other lines contain feminine endings? Why do you think a poet uses these endings?

9. Read the poem once more. What sort of feeling does it give you?

"The Lake Isle of Innisfree"

by William Butler Yeats

I will arise and go now, and go to Innisfree,
And a small cabin build there, of clay and
wattles made;
Nine bean rows will I have there, a hive for
the honeybee,
And live alone in the bee-loud glade.

And I shall have some peace there, for peace
comes dropping slow,
Dropping from the veils of the morning to
where the cricket sings;
There midnight's all a-glimmer, and noon a
purple glow,
And evening full of the linnet's wings.

I will arise and go now, for always night and
day
I hear lake water lapping with low sounds
by the shore;
While I stand on the roadway, or on the pavements grey,
I hear it in the deep heart's core.

Questions

1. Innisfree is a little island located in Lough Gill (Lake Gill), one of Ireland's many lakes. As a boy, William Butler Yeats knew of this island. Now, as a mature poet, he is determined to return to Innisfree. What does he plan to do on the island?

2. Yeats depends heavily on sight and sound images to develop his thought. List all the things you see and hear as you read through the poem.

3. Besides telling the reader directly what kind of sounds are associated with his tale (the cricket singing, "the bee-loud glade"), the poet uses other devices designed to develop musicality. You have already learned several of these devices in your study of poetry. Identify the figure of speech used in the following:

   (a) "a hive for the honeybee."
   (b) "I hear lake water lapping with low sounds by the shore;"

4. What is the rhyme scheme in each stanza?

5. What obvious punctuation difference do you see between the ending of line nine and all the other lines? What determines end punctuation? Ask your teacher to explain the terms "end-stopped" and "run-on."

6. What do you observe regarding punctuation in lines 1, 2, 3, 5, 7, 9, and 11? Read these lines, giving special attention to the punctuation. Your teacher will tell you the technical name for such a mid-pause in a line.

7. How do the first, second, and third lines in each stanza compare in length with the fourth line? Answer this question by counting the stressed syllables. They will be easier to count if you consider the syllable before the mid-line comma to be unstressed.

8. Stanza two talks about the peace and rest the poet hopes to find on Innisfree. Read stanzas one and two aloud several times. See if you can sense the slower pace of stanza two. Can you see anything in the structure of the stanza that produces this slower pace?

9. To what do the "roadway" and the "pavement grey" refer? This may be easier to answer if you recall the kind of place to which the poet wishes to go. Obviously, "pavement grey" is only a part of this place which the poet wishes to leave. This is a figure of speech called metonymy. A dictionary will define this term for you.

10. The poet says that he will arise and go to Innisfree. Do you think that he is as much concerned with the place as he is with what he knows he will find there? Explain your answer?

UNIT SUMMARY

Now that you have read and studied a number of poems, you will find that you have added a great deal to your knowledge of literature. You can now draw several important conclusions which we hinted at in the introduction. First observe one caution. Never lose sight of the fact that one reason why literature is important is that it enables you to participate, in a very real sense, in the experience presented by the author. Such participation broadens your horizons and acquaints you with people, things, and events which you might never confront directly. You are, through the study of literature, able to become a more complete human being and therefore a happier one.

Consider now a few of the conclusions that can be safely made about poetry. Your understanding of a poem sometimes depends on biographical, historical, psychological, philosophical, or linguistic information. By reading "O Captain! My Captain!" you were carried back in time to the assassination of President Lincoln. Your response to the poem was undoubtedly more sensitive than the response of students a decade ago, for you have witnessed the assassination of a President and know the full horror of such a deed. Whitman disguised the subject of his poem almost as if he felt the tragedy was too shocking for human comprehension. So his poem, apart from being an unusually sensitive account of a terrible crime, is a fine example of the kind of information needed if you are to grasp the poet's meaning. You needed to understand the use of symbolism to see that the Captain is really President Lincoln, and you needed to know a little about Whitman. With this knowledge the poem unfolds. "On First Looking into Chapman's Homer" provides a further example. You needed to know, among other things, a little history. Emily Dickinson's tricks with syntax and Masefield's interesting use of word combinations needed consideration before your understanding was sufficiently complete. Poetry, then, cannot be studied in an intellectual vacuum.

A second observation that can be made is that a poem is the sum total of all of its parts. The subject, the poetic elements (form), and the poet's attitude to his subject (point of view) can be viewed separately for the purposes of sharpening your perception, but eventually the poem must be viewed as a whole. Do not fail to read a poem again after you have studied it stanza by stanza and line by line. It is interesting to take a clock apart to see how it works, but you must put it together again or you have destroyed the clock even though you have not injured any single part. Studying a poem is much the same. If you fail to put the poem together again, you will destroy it. Any one of the poems you have studied in this unit exemplifies this point.

As a reader, you can claim only partial understanding of a selection unless you become involved in the experience presented by the poet. Can you accept the challenge that Whitman gave himself in "A Noiseless Patient Spider"? Can you feel the loneliness that Yeats felt when he walked the cold, gray London streets and longed for his Lake Isle? The questions you answered and the class discussions you had helped you to explore, but your final reactions came from the poem itself.

A final valid conclusion that can be made now that you have completed this unit is that, within certain limits, complex and symbolic poems may have more than one valid interpretation. Naturally, an interpretation, to be valid, must be supported by the text. The significance of this possibility for you as a reader is that your understanding and appreciation of poetry will grow as you become wiser and more experienced. You may not, for example, be able to understand fully the challenge Whitman gave his soul because you may not as yet be aware of your place in the "measureless oceans of space"; but when you read this poem as a senior, your response should be much richer.

Remember these points as you continue your study of poetry. You will find that your response to poetry will be much more complete and satisfactory.

Supplementary Poems

From Story Poems

"The Charge of the Light Brigade," Alfred Lord Tennyson - p. 19.

"The Minstrel Boy," Thomas Moore - p. 197.

"Come Up from the Fields Father," Walt Whitman - p. 218.

"The Walrus and the Carpenter," Lewis Carroll - p. 317.

"The Cremation of Sam McGee," Robert W. Service - p. 321.

"The Shooting of Dan McGrew," Robert W. Service - p. 435.

"The Wreck of the Hesperus," Henry Wadsworth Longfellow - p. 363.

"Ah, Are You Digging on My Grave?" Thomas Hardy - p. 380.

"The Inchcape Rock," Robert Southey - p. 393.

From Immortal Poems

"Pippa's Song," Robert Browning - p. 399.

"Home-Thoughts from Abroad," Robert Browning - p. 399.

"To Brooklyn Bridge," Hart Crane - p. 562.

"When I Was One-and-Twenty," A. E. Housman - p. 485.

"Annabel Lee," Edgar Allan Poe - p. 364.

"I Think Continually of Those Who Were Truly Great," Stephen Spender - p. 589.

"Crossing the Bar," Alfred Lord Tennyson - p. 397.

"Animals," Walt Whitman - p. 422.